

Governor's Committee on Disability Issues & Employment
Awards Subcommittee Meeting
Post Event Wrap Up
11:00-12:00 pm
11-02-2022

Minutes

1: Meeting called to order (welcome, roll call, housekeeping) – Meeting called to order by Janet at 11:06am (waiting for Ryan to join). Janet welcomed everyone and thanked them for being here. She said she is excited to hear everyone's feedback. Present for staff were Ryan, Emily, Elaine, and Elizabeth (thank you to everyone for attending). Present for subcommittee members were Matt, Kevin, Amy, Clarence, Cullyn, Kristin, Mike, Janet, and Daniel. People were asked to please state their name prior to speaking and raise their hand to indicate a comment, especially as we will be going around the room soliciting feedback from everyone.

2: Approve the meeting minutes from October 19 - our last meeting was held 2 days before the event and comprehensive minutes were sent, if everyone had a chance to review, we are seeking a motion to approve. Matt moved and Amy seconded, minutes were approved as written.

3: Feedback about the venue (round robin) – Janet started by mentioning that we recognize that not everyone who was on the call could attend, but we'd like to get feedback about the venue from those that were there. She also shared that Emily had sent some feedback out. Elaine started by saying she thought it was great, that the hotel staff were very helpful, that it was easy to get around, that the continental breakfast offered by the hotel for those who stayed over was good, that the stage worked well (even though the ramp did not), and that it was easy to get to. Ryan wondered how what we received in terms of food at the venue compared to what we had at Microsoft in years past. Various folks stated that the price and minimums were different at MS as they recalled that there was 1 entrée course with a salad perhaps and rolls and expensive cookies, and that overall, it was more expensive at Microsoft. Others were of the opinion that the meal provided at the venue this year was nice and plenty, that folks at their table ate everything, that perhaps it was even too much food, and we might consider providing a leaner meal if at breakfast or midday (especially if it saves money), and that perhaps dessert is not needed. Folks also thought that the space was laid out well for the number of people, and that the layout was good and didn't interfere with being able to move about freely, and agreed that overall, the facility was nice, easy to find, navigate, and get to, and great overall. The room was full and didn't seem bare, and provided social distancing. The free and plentiful parking was nice and different from Microsoft, where it was difficult. A comment was made that perhaps it was a bit hard to see from the outer edges of the wide room, and that perhaps we should consider arranging a carpool by region earlier on in the process, or even using a service to assist those who cannot drive. Others agreed that it was a great place, easy to get to, a good venue overall, good meal, and that the room looked full.

Janet shared that the hotel staff was very helpful in terms of helping to provide entertainment for a child who was in attendance and also in providing an alternate meal to one attendee who did not want either of the provided options. She wrote a letter to the management and banquet staff, who shared it with the team. Regarding the children in attendance, it was suggested that perhaps in the future we make a note on the registration that childcare is not provided and that this is a business event. A question was asked about whether people could see the screens okay with the lighting and from various locations. One person mentioned that they could see the screen and captioning fine even from the edge of the room, but they do not have any vision impairments, which may have helped. A taller stage may have helped with this as well, however (going forward in the future). It was hard to tell from the photographs. It was also shared that a video was taken of the ceremony and that we are following up on that. Other comments included that the stage was a bit small, that we should put a deadline on the Governor's video if possible, and that we should provide verbal instructions to nominees and recipients at the start of the event about how to accept certificates and awards--see Emily's list.

4: Feedback from evaluations/surveys (review results) – surveys about the event were handed out at the registration table for people to take and fill out, and were collected from the tables during cleanup, with 18 out of about 70 returned. The results were compiled and sent out to all. The results were briefly reviewed during this time—with 67% of folks hearing about the event from their nominator or as a nominee (which is why the number of nominations received correlates with the number of attendees at the event), otherwise 11% heard from a coworker or email, and 22% from a community rehab provider (their employer) or a GCDE member. No one disagreed that the registration area was clearly marked, and we had plenty of volunteer greeters at the door which helped, along with the overall layout of the hotel. 94% said that the registration process was timely and efficient, and no one disagreed. 94% agreed that registration table staff were courteous and helpful, thank you to everyone who volunteered. Upwards of 80% agreed that the facility was clean and comfortable, as well as accessible. No one disagreed. Everyone agreed that the food was good, no one disagreed. There were some who responded “N/A” to the dietary restrictions question. 100% agreed that the printed materials were accessible, 94% said the PowerPoint was easy to understand, the same goes for the program booklet. 78% either agreed or strongly agreed that they would submit a nomination next year, and 83% either agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend others to do the same. The other feedback was comments, essentially someone thanking us for the excellent communication regarding their nomination, someone suggesting we consider adding people's pronouns to the program booklet, and that it was a wonderful event overall. A handful of people also provided their contact information for follow up if needed. Overall, the feedback received was very positive. One person asked to share their experience with having attended this event as a subcommittee member as well as one other event a Microsoft prior to joining the committee. They shared that the stories people told were valuable, and that the power of the lived experience in the room was moving, but that they recognize the folks organizing the event may not have had time to pause and reflect on that so wanted to bring it to folks attention and believes it would be a great way to market and draw attention to our event. They also felt that the smaller event was beneficial in keeping it short, sweet, and keeping people engaged.

5: Any additional feedback about overall process (round robin) – some notes were sent out by Emily prior to the meeting, the highlights of which included the following:

1 – We should separate out the nominator info, survey questions, and support documentation pieces of the nomination form so that people can save as they go along (it was also suggested that a small workgroup be put together to work on this beginning in January)

2 – It was suggested that we send reminders about our event and the nomination process year-round, so it stays on people's radar, particularly the Toby Olson Award, which is open all year

3 – It was suggested that we consider having more judges this year so there is less work per person in terms of the number of categories needing to be reviewed

4 – It was also suggested we expand our tip sheet of what we look for in a successful nomination

5 – It was suggested that we send out a general reminder (or reminders) on the listserv as the nomination process starts to ask people to check their spam or junk folders in case our messages are inadvertently being routed there

6 – It was suggested we try to get sponsors at least 6 months sooner, if possible near to the start of the year, but this may require having a date and venue secured

7 – To that end, it was suggested we try to secure a venue as soon as possible, as early as the start of the year

See the feedback above for the other items regarding the governor's video, taller stage, etc.

6: Discussion of Awards meeting schedule kickoff for 2023 – Janet kicked it to Matt (and Yvonne who wasn't present) for this agenda topic as they will be the chairs in 2023. Typically, we take a break for the holidays, and meet monthly from Jan-Mar, twice monthly from Apr-Jun, thrice monthly in Jul, and weekly beginning in Aug-Oct. We should start with setting a meeting date in January.

7: Discussion of Awards ceremony date for 2023 – Yvonne was not present and should be involved in the discussion. Our next step may be to poll people. Matt suggested that we consider a similar schedule as we did this year if it worked for folks for now. Typically, the event takes place in October, or NDEAM. We should consider setting a date ASAP. If Fridays are selected, the options would be the 6th, 13th, 20th, or 27th. Discussion was had that the 13th may not look as good optically, and the 27th may be too late. It is our goal to decide by January or before so that we can reserve a venue and don't run into as many issues with places being booked already.

8: Any other business or items for the good of the order – Janet thanked everyone for pitching in on so many tasks in a variety of ways to make this event happen. She thought it was good to see and meet some people for the first time at the event. She knows it was a big commitment over the year but believes it was a success. Janet was thanked for her continued leadership. We will miss her, and she will miss us, and we couldn't have done it without one another. We should all be proud of what we accomplished, and excited for the future.

9: Meeting adjourned - a couple of minutes after 12.