



Approved 4/11/2021 Leadership Meeting. EJ

These meeting minutes submitted to the leadership board and posted to wiki by the DACN Secretary, Elizabeth Jenkins. Additional reports and documents posted as well.

These meeting minutes shall be reviewed, corrected, and approved at the next meeting on April 11, 2020, at 8:00 pm (CST).

Meeting called to order at 8:08 pm.

This was a regular monthly meeting of the China country committee leadership board of Democrats Abroad, held on the 7th of March 2021, at 8:00 pm (CST), via Zoom video conference. The chair presided and the reading of the minutes by the secretary was dispensed with (historically notes have been reviewed outside the meeting and approved at the start of each meeting). The online meeting was recorded.

Attendance

The secretary, Elizabeth Jenkins, was absent at the start of the meeting and joined only about 30 minutes before the end. Eileen Walsh, at-large member of the board, took notes for most of the meeting and passed them to the secretary when she joined.

Present (10 board members): Kim Wong, Patrick Cranley, Elizabeth Jenkins, Justin Fischer, Elaine Chow, Alexander Lee, Faith Gary, Eileen Walsh, Jacob Aldaco, Jennifer Eveland, Elizabeth Jenkins

Absent: Devika Koppikar

Other Members: Terry Watkins, Dr. Kymmberli Stowe, Jordania Rowden, Sam Wong

Agenda and Best Practices

Kim reviews the agenda and rules for the meeting.

5 minutes - DA China Meeting Minutes Approval

40 minutes - Chapter Status Report

30 minutes - Motions + New Business - election of Global Caucus Liaison, Nominations and Elections Committee

15 minutes - Open Floor

Meeting Minutes Approved

The meeting minutes for our last meeting for February 2021 were approved by unanimous voice vote.

- Alexander suggests board members make amendments to the minutes ahead of the meeting. You can add those directly to the document by inserting a [comment](#).
- Alex has inserted some changes, but they were not substantive only stylistic.

Welcome to New Members

Kim provided an introduction of DA for new members.

Reports Presented

See slide deck, except where noted below.

I. Chair's Report – Kim Wong

See report in presentation.

Schedule - Thank you to Charisse and Alexandra Smith. They have been working to organize Women's History Month events.

II. Treasurer's Report – Justin Fischer

See report in presentation.

No changes.

III. Membership Report by the Secretary – Elizabeth Jenkins

none

IV. Communications – Elaine Chow

See report in presentation.

Reiteration of Event Best Practices - event form, timeline

- Alex: We talked about updating the form last meeting (in the minutes). Suggest adding a field for the person to be contacted about the event. -Elaine: The form is ok as is.
- Jacob: Lifted some restrictions to Smart Shanghai allowing DA events to be published. Please let me know if I can help publish there. -Elaine: Will do.

Commented [1]: This is a comment. You can actually turn on "Suggesting" in the menu that probably has the blue word "Editing" above and changing it to the green "suggesting" (this is called "commenting" in MSWord). This allows everybody to see suggestions without changing the document. The Secretary can then accept the changes to which there are no objections when she finalizes the minutes.

I have suggested to the Secretary that our final minutes should be saved in PDF so that when someone leaves the organization or Google Docs ceases to exist, we will still have the record. It also prevents subsequent editing.

Commented [2]: I have posted last month's minutes as PDF. I emailed the leadership board about my intention with the assigned priv.

Commented [3]: _Marked as resolved_

Commented [4]: _Re-opened_
Thanks!

- Alex: Most of our events are planned on a much shorter timeline than this. Even when we have provided images, things have not been posted to IG. Alex wondered if some of the work related to events could be delegated to other Comms committee members. -Elaine hasn't been able to find other members. Alex offered to do Facebook posts as he does for the NH and VT pages, suggested we find a volunteer to contribute. [Sound garbled at recording time marker: 11:56-14:15]

Women's History Month Events

- Upcoming events reviewed.
March 8: Sherita Lovelace
March 15: Day of Affirmations in the Women's Caucus WeChat group.
March 28: Open Mic Night for poetry etc.
- Alexander: We need to be careful about accepting members from other countries into groups that are not DA groups but are co-branding with our logo. . This event is cohosted with Hopelessly Tatiana (Alexandra Smith's pseudonymous blog). We can talk about that offline. -Elaine: Great.

Election Comms Plan (Leadership Board Election)

- Timeline of requirements for the Annual General Meeting and Nominations Elections Committee. Comms will have an additional review of materials with NEC. Will be similar to the global comms. See slide for details.
- Alex: Is there a deadline for people to signup for DA to be able to participate in the election? -Elaine: Sam just says you have to be a DA member before the election.
- Kim: Introduces Sam Wong who is in attendance. She is former Vice Chair of DACN and currently part of the DA Asia Pacific (AP) Regional leadership.
- Sam: Current AP Regional Vice Chair (RVC) is Kat, global international excom and Democratic Party Committee Abroad (DPCA) voting member. Global (DPCA) meetings are open. She ensures countries stay in compliance and supports countries without a country committee (bylaws, members for NEC). She also has monthly regional meetings.

V. Motions and New Business

Scheduling the Annual General Meeting (AGM) - Kim

Kim: At this AGM we will be electing a new leadership board. Initially proposed end of May for the AGM (May 23). Then there was some dissent -- calling it a "power grab" or "elitist" to hold our AGM after the Global AGM. I have tried to be fair and transparent. Last year, when there was a shuffle and I took over as chair, there was almost no training and I was plunged into the Global AGM as a voting member. The AGM was long and overwhelming. To try to keep things open with the rest of the board, I asked they weigh-in on the votes I had to cast. So I want to make the next transition smoothly. This global AGM we will elected

Alex: I sent the email that said it was "power grabby" were not my words and I think it is feasible to prepare new leaders for the global AGM. The DPCA charter gives us until June 30th, so we can wait. But as the terms for leadership board are 2 years, it makes sense to align those 2 years with voting in 2 global AGMs. So that's the issue I wanted to raise. I am not attacking your fairness on this issue. Should I have brought this up differently?

Kim: No, that was ok.

Alex: Suggest we do it on May 7/8.

Elaine: Pushes the timeline so the NEC nominated tonight, I would only be able to create the comms materials needed tonight to publish tomorrow.

Sam: Haven't been involved in DACN for about 2 years. Looking at the bylaws (as they have been updated Dec 2019), the 2 months deadline is pretty flexible in terms of what is considered "notice" and as long as we give a thorough notice 30 days before we should be ok.

Alex: Right. The minimum requirement for the 2 months deadline, just needs to be some notice -- could be email, posts to wechat. But we do have customs about how we do this.

Kim motion: Hold the leadership board election on May 23.

Seconded. Vote:

Aye - Patrick

Aye - Elaine

Aye - Jenny

Aye - Kim

Aye - Jacob

Aye - Eileen

Nay - Alexander

Passes: Elections will be May 23rd.

NEC - Appoint Members

This committee will be running the election of the next leadership board. It cannot include anyone who will be running. We will review all the responsibilities with Elaine and Kim.

1. Chair

Alex: Nominated Dr. Kymmberli Stowe. She has attended more of the leadership meetings than any other member. She is working on the black caucus and is on the legal committee. She accepts.

[Faith has lost connection and will rejoin]

- Alex: How many people will we appoint? Three with a lead.
- Kim: Nominate Sam Wong. She is one of the most experienced and trust her. She accepts. Can we vote by private message to Eileen?

Alex: Let me check the bylaws first. I think you have the appointment power, so no vote needed. Board approves your appointments.

Kim: I would like to appoint Sam Wong.

Alex: So the board would have to do the three people tonight, we need to find three people at this meeting.

Kim: Can I do this later in the week?

Alex: You would have to notice a special meeting, which would be pretty awkward. No, you should have known that. Well, I sent it to you.

Kim: I'm sorry I didn't realize.

Kymmberli: Nominates Jordania or Terry. Jordania has been around but hasn't been an official member before. Both of these people know boards. Jordania seems to have dropped off. Terry accept? No reply.

Patrick: Both are already DA members?

Alexander: Yes.

Kim: "Caramel Kitten" can you identify yourself please?

Elaine: It's Jordania.

Kim: Jordania would you like to be on the NEC? Yes, she accepts.

Appoints Sam Wong, Kymmberli Stowe, and Jordania Roden to the NEC. Thank you so much! And congratulations.

Global Caucus Liaison

This is the position that Brittini used to have. It is an existing leadership board member, reviewing caucuses bylaws, connecting with global caucuses and keeping the DACN leadership board updated on activities. Can we please take a vote? Eileen is taking notes, so can you get private messages for people's votes?

Alex: We cannot have a secret election.

Kim: Ok, put your vote in the chat. Alexander has volunteered with this. Do you want to talk about this?

Alex: Yes, I have been active trying to find someone to start the Youth and Hispanic Caucuses. And have pretty regular interactions with the ProDA leadership in AP.

Elaine: Nominates Justin for Global Caucus Liaison. Has done a lot of "vote from abroad" events and is familiar with the leadership of the global caucuses. I have all confidence in him to represent China globally.

Alex: The implication is that I misrepresented China?

Elaine: I didn't say that.

Justin accepts the nomination.

Kim: Please vote in the chat box.

Jacob: I wanted to second the nomination for Alexander who has been really helpful in these last few months. I am the chair of the Progressive Caucus and he helped us draft the bylaws and to date has been the most involved.

Dr. Stowe: Agree with Jacob. Wanted to acknowledge his work actually organizing the caucuses, for his knowledge about mobilize and emailing, communications, where to get registered, security. He has been the lead for all the caucuses, keeping us well informed.

[audible, disruptive laughter from a board member who unmuted]

Kim: Please vote in the chat for Alexander or Justin for GCL. Only board members vote.
Votes for Justin: Eileen, Jenny, Elaine, Kim, Patrick, Faith.
Votes for Alexander: Jacob.
Justin is the next Global Caucus Liaison.
Congratulations.

Elaine - Motion

Not sure if this needs a motion or vote, but impacts a board member. And comms is a lot of work. Given the increased work coming up in these two months before the AGM.

Dr. Stowe: Problems with your audio.

Elaine: Ok, to repeat, I want to remove a person on the board from the comms wechat group.

Dr. Stowe: Oh ok. You want to remove a board member from the comms committee?

Elaine: There is no committee, just a wechat group.

Dr. Stowe: Is there a comms person for each caucus there?

Elaine: No.

Kim: We already said you had final say about wechat groups, so I think you do not need a vote on that. It's your decision.

Elaine: Ok, then I will do that.

Alex: You keep referring to comms groups, so how many groups are you removing this individual from? Would you like to provide some evidence that this person has done something that is not professional?
[talking over each other]

Elaine: Do you want to put your hand up?

Alex: Do you want me to put my hand up? You spoke without putting your hand up. I would like you to put forth some evidence that I did not behave in a professional way.

Elaine: Alright. Ok -

Alex: We're all busy. When I forward messages that are verbatim from Global, I don't expect a spaz attack.

Elaine: A spaz attack?

Alex: Yes, a spaz attack. You saying that you're upset and you don't have time. I am forwarding timely verbatim information about [internal DA] elections.

Elaine: Alright. The reasons I want to remove you from comms activity, including chats and stop you from posting in the announcements for the rest of my term are (1) Alexander, you cannot take critique without responding with condescension. (2) Every time I give a suggestion, you have told me to create a document to specifically address your issue. Usually I have already produced multiple "best practices" documents that can be extrapolated to cover any of these issues. For instance, the event form. I do not believe I need to specify that the field for event copy should include who you want people to contact. And I'm tired of my being clear to be an excuse for you to not follow anything anyways. This always turns into a long and time-consuming debate. (3) This negativity has caused several members withdraw and stop engagement in the comms chat. This is directly related to you and your name has been mentioned specifically as why people don't want to talk in those groups.

Alex: So the answer is the comms group?

Elaine: Yes, and please stop posting to the announcements. I will remove you.

Alex: Board members are allowed to post in announcements. We decided that as a board and it says that in the group.

Elaine: Yes, I have given you suggestion after suggestion-

Alex: (interrupting, speaking over Elaine so she cannot be heard) And I have taken those suggestions and I have followed those suggestions and I have made concise things and then referenced websites. And made those messages shorter.

Elaine: You have done that once.

Alex: I have done it three or four times. And I don't have time to do it every time because I am also busy.. I'm head of-

Elaine: (interrupting) Then stop posting in announcements.

Alex: I am a board member.

Elaine: Yes, which is why I should be allowed to post stuff from DA in announcements. It's outrageous to keep a board member from keeping people informed about elections.

Justin: Just wanted cool things down and remind you to not interrupt each other. One person talking at a time. Take turns without talking over each other.

Elaine: Since I am running this discussion, I will give the floor to Alexander and wait until he is done talking.

Alex: I have not attacked people in the announcements group. I have not called people petty or mean. Other board members have done that in the comms group. I think it's inappropriate to sanction a board member for forwarding information that doesn't meet your exact standards, which don't exist. And that I have asked for us to form. I have put a document together and happy to share, but seems like that's not something you're open to. We set a bad precedent kicking board members off committees where they are willing to serve and do the work. And I have volunteered for Facebook. You never asked me if I would just quit the comms committee before this meeting.

Elaine: (after a silence) I don't want to keep this debate going. The evidence is in the chat histories. I don't want to have to keep reminding you over and over.

Motion- Elaine: Let me remove Alexander's posting privileges in announcements and remove him from the comms group.

Alex: Can you just ask me if I want to leave the comms group without a vote and publicly embarrassing me?

Elaine: I tried.

Alex: No you didn't.

Kim: Alex are you willing to step off of the comms team?

Alex: Yes, but I am not willing to not post in announcements.

Elaine - Motion.

Alex: Can we discuss?

Elaine: no. Can someone second and vote on this?

Justin: If you feel you are entitled to post in groups, can we at least have a clearance process? An approval process? Is that too much work for the comms dir? Looking for some consensus.

Alex: I am fine with that. I have put stuff in the comms group and nothing happens and then it is in the newsletter. I act immediately when I receive something germane to the groups.

Justin: Would you be willing to accept "no" as an answer, if the comms director doesn't want something posted?

Alex: Yes.

Justin: I think people are feeling like they are being told how to do their jobs. No one likes that. Especially if elected for that job. And this might be a matter of bedside manner on the part of our legal counsel -

Alex: (interrupting) That goes both ways.

Justin: ok..-

Alex: I have been called petty and mean by the board chair and secretary in that list for speaking up and I can share what was interpreted as mean if that's necessary... Since this is suddenly come into public record and hasn't been handled in a professional way. I can also share what was caused to call me petty. (someone tries to interrupt) when I asked if I could see the material about my event before it was published and there was a mistake. And mistakes happen, but I think we need a process so that those kinds of mistakes that have happened over and over - like the wrong QR code, or links that don't work - so I think it's important to honor the people that volunteer to run events. The comms director should check with the event organizer before those messages go out. And that's what I said and I got called petty.

Elaine: This has already be talked through with you privately.

Alex: No it hasn't.

Elaine: Yes it has. Anyway I don't want this to drag on any longer than it needs to. We could keep arguing all this and we have tried to talk this through.

Kim Motion: Comms director can request a board member not post in announcements.

Aye - Elaine

Aye - Elizabeth

Aye - Faith

Aye - Eileen

Aye - Justin

Aye - Kim

Nay - Alex

Abstain - Jacob

Passes. Comms director can request a board member not post in announcements.

Kim - thanks everyone for voicing your opinions on this. That was tough. And I apologize if I have hurt anyone's feelings in the past few months. We need to try to find ways to work with each other and we have different working styles.

Resolutions

Alexander submitted.

Resolution 1

Resolution:

"The Caucuses at the global and country level have a unique role to identify potential leaders from diverse backgrounds and support them in striving for leadership positions. We are only stronger when all groups are represented, including groups that have historically been denied the right to participate in any form, whether intentionally or unintentionally."

(This is language from the letter that I forwarded to the Board last week, which was signed by all Global Caucus chairs.)

Motion: Kim, seconded. Voted and passed

Aye - Justin

Aye - Elizabeth

Aye - Jacob
Aye - Kim
Aye - Jenny
Aye - Alexander
Aye - Elaine
Aye - Eileen

Resolution #2

Resolution
"The DACN board on behalf of its members extends gratitude and congratulations to Jasmine Cochran and Alexandra Smith for being added to the DA GBC Poet's Circle for their lyric contributions to the political discourse."

Motion: Kim, seconded. Voted and passed

Aye - Alexander
Aye - Jenny
Aye - Elizabeth
Aye - Kim
Aye - Elaine
Aye - Eileen
Aye - Justin

VI. Open Floor

Jacob: A person was removed from the Progressive Caucus chat group. After talking with him directly, I want to recommend inviting him to rejoin. Kim approves.

Elizabeth: Anticipating a transition to a new secretary, creating exit documentation. If anyone on the call has any interest in learning more about the role, please contact me. I am interested in a smooth transition.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on April 11, 2021, at 8:00 pm (CST)

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:45 PM.