



Homework, group work, important work

Three ASWB committees met in person—but not for the first time—in July

Twenty ASWB volunteers gathered in Washington, D.C., July 9 for a day of committee meetings, but they weren't just starting work—most were continuing the work they had already begun via emails and conference calls.

The Regulatory Education and Leadership (REAL) Committee members had been assigned homework prior to the in-person meeting, from conducting a literature review on continuing competence to reviewing the competencies the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses to accredit social work degree programs. “We’re still early in the process,” says Jan Fitts, ASWB’s education and training senior manager. Fitts, along with Continuing Competence Coordinator Lisa Casler Haun and

committee chair Merri-Lee Hanson of New Brunswick, is working with the REAL Committee to plan the 2017 ASWB Education Conference. The conference will focus on continuing competence, and the committee has been having regular conference calls to put the meeting together.

“The first thing we did when we met in July was review the evaluations from the 2016 conference,” Fitts says. By going over the evaluations in a group, not only does the committee learn from what worked and what didn’t during the previous conference, but newer committee members can get a glimpse of all the elements that go into planning a successful event.

“The World Marketplace table



REAL Committee (from left): Leisa Askew (AL), chair Merri-Lee Hanson (NB), Carolyn Szafran (KS), Kate Zacher-Pate (MN), Ginny Dickman (ID), Kenya Anderson (TN), and Steven Pharris (TN), Board liaison



RAS Committee (from left): Richard Silver (QC), Board liaison, Jennifer Fulcher (MS), chair Laura Thiesen (AK), Mark Scales (NS), Elizabeth Pope (NC), Spencer Blalock (MS), Jacqueline Lowe (SC), and ASWB President M. Jenise Comer (MO)

discussions were well-received,” Fitts says. So 2017 attendees can look forward to similar opportunities to share ideas and learn from one another. The REAL Committee is also sharing ideas with the Continuing Competence Committee, which met in June. Because of the overlapping focus between the charge of the Continuing Competence Committee and the topic for next year’s education conference, the two committees are collaborating on ideas about the conference.

Meanwhile, in another room, the members of the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee were discussing the association’s governing documents—bylaws and policy manual. One of their charges was to ensure that the policy manual reflects the requirements of the bylaws. Committee members had completed their homework, of course, by reviewing both documents in smaller working groups via conference call in advance of the July in-person meeting. The Bylaws and Resolutions Committee will make recommendations for

bylaws changes to the Board of Directors in advance of the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly, but ASWB members should expect to vote on minor bylaws changes after last year’s major update.

The 2016 changes adopted by the Delegate Assembly resulted from two years of ongoing effort—by committee members who served two years together to ensure continuity. This year, there is a new committee chair, Carla Moore

of Louisiana, who was a member of that two-year team, but there are new members as well. “The opportunity to have face-to-face conversations is really valuable,” says Jayne Wood, director of communications and marketing, who staffs the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee. “Plus, having input from others who aren’t always available for conference calls is really helpful.”

Like the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee, the Regulation and Standards (RAS) Committee wrapped up a multiyear project in 2015 by completing a three-year review of the Model Social Work Practice Act. “It’s a refined document now,” says Jennifer Henkel, director of member services, so the committee won’t be doing another cover-to-cover review right away. “Moving forward, we want member input before we do another wholesale review of the model law.”

At the July meeting, the RAS Committee focused on other ASWB services, with a special emphasis on the Public Protection Database (PPD) and the Disciplinary Guidebook. Dan Sheehan,



Bylaws and Resolutions Committee (from left): Kristi Plotner (MS), Brian Carnahan (OH), Tim Brown (TX), chair Carla Moore (LA), Ebony Clarke (OR), Meenakshi Budhreja (AR), Board liaison, and Claude Leblond (QC)

ASWB's information technology manager, gave the committee a detailed demonstration of the PPD system and talked about how reporting to the PPD can give ASWB members an easier way to comply with national reporting requirements for disciplinary actions. Sheehan will also be presenting about the PPD as part of the Administrators Forum prior to the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Delegate Assembly.

As part of their focus on the PPD, the RAS Committee also developed an email about the database, which was sent to ASWB members after the meeting. In addition to being a critical element in public protection, PPD "is a key tool for social work practice mobility," Henkel says, "no matter what the mobility solution ends up being."

In addition to the appointed committee members, the RAS and Bylaws committee meetings included ASWB legal counsel Dale Atkinson and ASWB Executive

Vice President Dwight Hymans (now chief operating officer). ASWB Board President M. Jenise Comer of Missouri sat in on all three committee meetings in an *ex officio* capacity.

Like the members of the REAL and Continuing Competence committees, the RAS Committee members see a collaborative relationship with the Mobility Task Force in the coming years, as recommendations to facilitate mobility will necessarily affect social work regulations. "The RAS Committee is integral to our work on mobility," Henkel says.

As these three sets of volunteers demonstrated in July—along with members of the Finance, Nominating, Continuing Competence, and Examination committees who met earlier in the year—ASWB's committee volunteers are integral to all facets of the association's work.

Learn more about the work that ASWB committees do on the [ASWB members website](#). If you are interested and participating and are currently serving on your social work licensing board, feel free to complete the [online committee interest form](#)!