Wild Animal Initiative  
Board Meeting Minutes  

16 Mar 2022  

In Attendance (sufficient for a quorum):  
- Cameron Meyer Shorb (Interim Executive Director)  
- Christine Perry (Board President)  
- Hollis Howe (Researcher Services Coordinator)  
- Ignacio Moore  
- Josh You (Secretary)  
- Nikolai Vetr  
- Stien van der Ploeg (Treasurer)  

ORDERS OF BUSINESS  
- Organizational updates  
  - WAI has chosen the recipients of the first round of its grant program. WAI will fund **seven** projects related to juvenile wild-animal welfare for a total of around $400,000.  
    - WAI may do public/press outreach related to funded projects. Board discussed whether grantees should be asked to participate in outreach efforts. Consensus was that it should not be any sort of requirement, but probably many grantees will find it an attractive opportunity.  
  - Researcher services update  
    - A beta version of the networking database is live, running on Airtable. Board members viewed a live demo presented by Hollis. This is intended to be a community resource to help wild-animal welfare researchers and practitioners connect with each other.  
    - Future researcher services projects include a listserv, research library, and a jobs/grants board.  
  - Hiring - WAI is hiring at a rapid pace this year. WAI will soon be bringing on an operations director, development coordinator, and hiring manager. In April they will start hiring for a grants coordinator, academic outreach specialist, research specialist, and project manager.  
    - So far, WAI’s management capacity has been able to keep up with the pace of hiring, and a new hiring manager may increase this capacity.  
  - Conferences - WAI will attend several conferences this year, including ASAB, Bostiber, and a conference on animal sentience hosted by Rethink Priorities and the London School of Economics.
WAI is making progress on its policy scoping project (early exploration on government policies related to wild-animal welfare) and held a productive meeting with several law and policy groups. They hope to release an initial report in early April.

WAI has prepared a draft strategic plan, including three-year goals and a ten-year vision, and is soliciting feedback from board members.

**Finances**
- Treasurer Stien van der Ploeg has not yet created a budget for 2022, but plans to do so before the next board meeting. Board will vote on the budget via email by April.
- Fundraising in 2021 was successful - WAI raised around $1.5 million, not including the restricted grants from Open Philanthropy.
- WAI spent around $496k in 2021, almost exactly what was budgeted.

**Committees**
- JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, inclusion) committee met and discussed ways to help ensure grant processes are fair. These could include doing outreach to underrepresented groups, having a policy of not including headshots, and possibly anonymizing applications, though that may be difficult due to the need to review publications.

**Board Expansion**
- Board plans to start looking into expanding the board again. Christine Perry has prepared some materials for the board with ideas about how to recruit board members.

**CLOSING**
- Board adjourned at 6:48 Central Time.
- Board will reconvene at 5:30 Central Time on May 12.

**FUTURE ACTION STEPS**
- Board members will each comment on the draft strategic plan, and coordinate to ensure that each section receives comments from at least one board member.