Wild Animal Initiative
Board Meeting Minutes

15 September 2022

In Attendance (sufficient for a quorum):
● Cameron Meyer Shorb (Executive Director)
● Christine Perry (Board President)
● Ignacio Moore (Board Member)
● Josh You (Board Secretary)
● Mark Onley (Executive Advisor)
● Nikolai Vetr (Board Member)
● Stien van der Ploeg (Board Treasurer)

ORDERS OF BUSINESS
● Treasurer Stein van der Ploeg resigned from the board, effective September 16, in order to take a position as the executive director of Animal Charity Evaluators.
● Organizational updates
  o Hiring: Wild Animal Initiative (WAI) has hired a large number of employees recently:
    ■ Two physiology research specialists: Michael Beaulieu and Bonnie Flint
    ■ Two scientific events and outreach coordinators: Anne Clay and Janire Castellano Bueno
    ■ Development coordinator: Ryan Torres. Ryan is WAI’s first full time development coordinator, and will help replace Stien’s work on development strategy and financial reporting.
    ■ Growing the team this quickly is difficult. WAI plans to be more explicit about norms and processes to help onboard the new employees.
  o Grants: WAI is preparing its next call for grant proposals, which will focus on ecosystem network effects and launch in October.
  o Strategy: Strategy Director Mal Graham has been researching what name to call the nascent scientific field focused on wild-animal welfare. “Welfare biology” is probably the leading candidate, partly due to its catchiness.
  o Operations
    ■ WAI will hold its annual retreat in-person in October in the DC area for all employees.
    ■ WAI is doing research to improve its hiring and onboarding process to help with future hiring rounds.
● Finances
  o WAI’s auditor has completed WAI’s audit and Form 990
Board voted unanimously to approve the audit and Form 990
  ○ So far this fiscal year (April 1 to August 31), WAI has raised approximately $763,000 and spent approximately $609,000.
  ■ WAI has around 18 months of operating runway, not including around $3m in restricted funds for grantmaking.

- Board Treasurer search
  ○ Board discussed two possible candidates to replace Stien van der Ploeg as Board Treasurer, in advance of a more in-depth discussion to happen at the next meeting.
  ○ Board recruitment, besides replacing the Treasurer, will happen next year.

- Committee updates
  ○ JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, inclusion) committee:
    ■ JEDI committee met previously and continued its discussion of whether board members should be compensated, to make board membership open to people of all financial backgrounds. This is similar to how WAI prefers asking job applicants to complete paid work tests over technical interviews, to help with inclusion by compensating candidates fairly for time.
      ● This doesn’t seem feasible, at least at the moment, because of the many paperwork requirements involved.
    ■ The JEDI committee also discussed whether WAI’s hiring is meeting its diversity goals.

CLOSING
- Board adjourned at 7:00 Central Time.
- Board will reconvene at 5:30 Central Time on November 10.