

## WEFMAX Day I

### WEF MESSAGE

**Presenter:** Howard Carter, WEF Vice President

- Shared his water story and growth within WEF.
- Need to be more people focused. Collaboration is necessary.

### IMPROVING MAs THROUGH COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Review WEF Core Value and meaning for Member Associations; Poll audience.

What collaboration and partnerships are important to MAs?

What are the gaps in success for these?

- Important definition - and arch is a truss made from straws and gumdrops
- Maximize discussion, have a focused topic, and provide documentation
- WEF Strategic Plan - Life Free of Water Challenges
- Four core values in WEF plan
  - Lead with purpose and agility
  - Focus on customers
  - Collaborate
  - Integrated DE&I
- Attract a diverse and passionate workforce
  - Need to create opportunities
  - Better communication
- Solve water challenges
  - Can't do this without collaboration

### POLL

- **How many WEFMAX's have you attended?**
  - First Time Attendee – 37%
  - Two or Three WEFMAX's – 39%
  - Four + WEFMAX's – 24%
- **I traveled here from...**
  - East of the Mississippi – 52%
  - West of the Mississippi – 45%
  - Other – 2%
- **I was born...**
  - East of the Mississippi – 60%
  - West of the Mississippi – 40%
- **I have been President of my MA**





- Howard - delegates are intended to be the communication group between the MA and WEF. Need to leverage the delegates for these type of issues and questions.

## MA COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS – MODERATED PANEL

**Moderators:** Diane Grossenheider and Cliff Cate

**Scribe:** John Killips **Timekeeper:** Todd Rasche **Mic. Helper:** Tom Inman

- **Joint Annual Conference Alabama and Mississippi** – Wheeler Crook (AL)
  - AL was fearful of change and didn't want to do anything different.
  - Went through a big strategic plan evaluation. Needs to be a working document and don't be afraid of changing the plan as things change
  - 900 attendees at joint conference, up from 300 less than 10 years ago
  - AL really didn't want to collaborate - everyone wanted their own piece and didn't want to work with others. Worked on getting other organizations involved together, operators, regulatory, adjacent orgs
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- **Missouri - How Is Collaboration Serving Our Members** – Todd Fulton (MWEA)
  - Joint meeting with AWWA has been going on for a long time. Good relationship and it's worked out really well.
  - Regulatory update, get EPA and MDNR to come in and talk. Last day used to be a boring presentation. Switched to a panel format, get some presentations and some answers.
  - Todd makes a horrible pun and should be ashamed 😊
- **Regional Student Design Competition** – Joe Lapastora (CSWEA)
  - IL/MN/WI (Central States)
  - Been doing this for 4 years. Started allowing universities from outside of the region. Decided to start reaching out to other MAs to get funding, information to get other people into the CS SDC.
  - Pay a stipend to the teams, and then get the other MAs involved to help fund this. Also go to WEF for a grant.
  - Have sponsors that help to pay for this.
  - Connection with the schools has been hard, because there's a lot of turnover on the students. Need to find a faculty advisor who is going to be there that can help bridge that gap year-year.
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- **Collaboration Across State Lines** – Kristin Johansen (RMWEA)
  - Working between states can be difficult as there are many differences between the locations, regulatory, financial, demographics, cultural, etc.
  - Identify commonalities, look at big picture, and find ways where everyone can work together
  - Common mission statement that all have buy in. Prioritize inclusivity. Don't let the majority (like Denver) overwhelm the smaller utilities and locations. Need to be able to accommodate both types.

- Understand that you can't always force collaboration. Need to respect the differences between orgs and everyone will have their own ideas
- How do you connect the non-urban areas, rural, other states. By engaging the professions and then starting with the YPs. Not likely to get huge membership swings - population is what it is. But want to increase engagement for the people who are in these areas.
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- **Regional YP Summit** – James Barsanti (NEWEA)
  - NEWEA has been doing this for 6 years
  - Do this on the Sunday of the conference. Full day for YPs. That's a pretty brilliant idea.
  - Mentor-mentee program. YPs coordinate this and get people paired up at the conference. Graduate ceremony for YP once they go through the program.
  - YP vs. EP? There's been discussion between the two. YP under 35 sure. But what about people who start career at 35+ - they aren't a YP but could be an EP. Maybe YP and EP are different. Good to have a group specifically for YP, but EP may need similar support but outside of the YP umbrella.
- **Joint conference stuff**
  - Goat Yoga?? Don't even want to know, really.
  - Need to get by the emotional stuff, because people often have their own things that they don't want to let down on.
  - Share resources and contracts between everyone so we can all see how we've been doing things and what works. Lessons learned, and share how we look at this. HOD needs to be having this conversation.

## WEF HOD NOMINATION UPDATE

**Presenter:** Leanne Scott (CWP – KT)

- Discussion on what HOD is, positions, etc.
- Email will come out that has this stuff in it.
- Delegate at large, generally belong to an underrepresented group

## WEF COLLABORATION - MODERATED PANEL

**Moderators:** Diane Grossenheider and Cliff Cate

**Scribe:** Cliff Cate   **Timekeeper:** Rodney Spires   **Mic. Helpers:** Katie Bruegge

- **Why was collaboration selected as a Core Value?** – Howard Carter (WEF)
  - Big part of the strategic plan
- **Collaboration and Inclusion – 5S** – Jeff Berlin for Nikita Lingenfelter (NWEA)
  - Should we update our ceremony? Old tradition akin to hazing is not really in our core values.
  - That's a really good point. Yes it's fun and maybe there's some fun to be had but does it belong in the official ceremony of 5S
  - From a DE&I lens the current ceremony probably doesn't check the box

- **Leadership Development Institute Collaboration** – Craig Williams (IWEA)
  - Aqua IN – 5 interns looking at HS seniors. 20 hr/wk. Intention is to not give them the grunt work but is actually looking to have them do real work. Getting in the lab, doing field investigations, maintenance, etc. Giving them opportunities to contribute.
  - Marion IN - pulling in kids from trade schools and bringing them into operations
- **WEF Students & YPs** - Ama Richardson, WEF Sr Manager SYPC
  - Water Policy Fly-In - scholarship for this. WEF will cover the \$150 admission and a \$500 stipend for travel, etc. Approx. 7 recipients for this, numbers are going up.
  - WEF/AWWA YP Summit - 200+ attendees. All day event, hit emerging issues, networking, collaboration and discuss challenges that people are having.
- **DE&I Feedback** – Donnell Duncan, HOD Speaker
  - Lot of participation in DE&I calls, committees.
  - Plenty of WEF support for DE&I

## WEFMAX Day 2

### HOD UPDATE

Presenter: Donnell Duncan

- Next call April 27
- WEF has a toolkit for DE&I easy to find

### HOD COMMITTEE AND WORKGROUP UPDATED

**Budget Committee** - Donnell Duncan

**DE&I Committee** - Jeff Berlin

**Water Advocacy Workgroup** - Peter Garvey

### WEF HOD of the FUTURE

**Presenters:** Scott Foley (MWEA) and Donnell Duncan (WEF HOD Speaker)

**Scribe:** Ama Richardson **Timekeeper:** Scott Foley **Mic Helper:** Charles McAllister

- How are the needs to MAs changing and how can the HOD change to match those needs?
  - Legal stuff, supporting
  - Partnership with AWWA - need something pushed down nationally to support partnership with AWWA MAs
  - Support partnership between different MAs and help make connections
  - WEFUnity - can we use this for better sharing between MAs?
  - Benefit and value of having a WEF BOT member at meetings? Or is there a better way to do that? Having a staff member, etc.?
  - MAs maybe need to have more info on what the HOD is to make sure we're sending the right people as delegates
  - How is WEF changing and how can HOD change to match needs
  - How do we keep HOD relevant to MAs in the future

## HOST SESSION

Collaboration and Successes with the St. Louis MS4 Stormwater Management Plan

**Presenter:** Jason Peterein, Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District

## WEF STRATEGIC PLAN DISCUSSION

Prepared by Strategic Plan Rollout Task Force

**Presenter:** Mandy Sheposh (CSWEA, Delegate-at-Large) & Mike Welke (Ohio)

**Scribe:** Ama Richardson **Timekeeper:** Scott Foley **Mic Helper:** Charles McAllister

- Operator training
- Robust award program
- Supplement childcare? Daily or at conferences
- Evaluate conferences to be more purpose driven. Maybe an overall theme, or carving out one day that is on that theme
- Involve operators and get them to not only attend but present
- Sustainability, education and focus, and making sure that we are sustainable
- Beer as avenue for water reuse, good communication tool and outreach
- Leadership academy, do across the different groups
- MA ESG goals, sustainability committee
- Introductory courses, training 101, workshops
- Biosolids day to farmers
- Can WEF give better definition and education on circular water economy. Not being used at events.
- WEF talking with big water users and talking with them about getting engaged with MAs
- Attendees are encouraged to use WEFUnity (formerly known as Hivebrite) and the HOD LinkedIn Group to help build community and foster group engagement.
- The following items were identified as the top 5 water issues in the industry: PFAS, funding, SSO's, water workforce development, and operator retention.
- Cost was cited as the greatest barrier to MA leader participation at the annual Fly-In in Washington, D.C.
- An invitation was made to sign up for the [Water Advocacy Workgroup](#).

ADJOURNED