



MANITOBA WOMEN'S INSTITUTE (MWI)
Board Meeting Minutes

June 18th, 2025

PRESENT:

Debra Barrett	President
Marge Knutson	President Elect
Mallory Makinson	Office Administrator
Vacant	MB Government Appointed Member
Michele Gurman	MB Government Appointed Member
Jacqueline Chartrand	Eastern Regional Rep (on leave)
Liz Chongva	Southwest Regional Rep
Liz Chongva	Northern Regional Rep
Thelma Blahey	MB Ag Representative
Gisela Nolting	Winnipeg-Interlake Regional Rep
Ann Mandziuk	Home Ec. Rep

Call to Order 9:00 a.m.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion: Moved by Liz Chongva that the agenda be adopted as circulated.
Seconded by Gisela Nolting. **CARRIED**

2. Approval of Minutes for March 19th, 2025

Motion: Moved by Gisela Nolting that the minutes from the Board Meeting held March 19th, 2025 be approved as circulated. Seconded by Marge Knutson. **CARRIED**

3. Acceptance of the Financial Reports

Motion: Moved by Marge Knutson that the financial reports for April 2025 and May 2025 be accepted as circulated. Seconded by Liz Chongva. **CARRIED**

4. CORRESPONDENCE

None

5. OA Report

- Completed book of reports.
- Completed the resolutions ballot mail out to members. Counted the ballots/recorded results with scrutineers.
- I attended marketing, finance, and board meetings and prepared the board meeting agenda/minutes. A wide variety of tasks completed in result of these meetings. Month end finances completed.
- Membership Registrations for the 2024-25 year continuing to come in late. Donations coming in - deposited and allocated/QuickBooks updated.
- Completed the financial reports with Sensus.
- Website is being continuously updated and monitored to keep it current. Updating current newsletters and zoom presentation advertising. Resolutions for 2025 added to website.
- Registered members for AGM.
- Created content for social media, advertisements, etc.
- Many other tasks were done this month; this is just a highlight of my month.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 AGM 2026 Location

There is some concern about viability of branches in the Western area.

Question: should wait to book a venue until November when we know if they're coming back or not. Possibly the Board could provide the venue in Portage la Prairie and request one of the branches book the speakers. Domain had suggested they might be interested at our AGM.

Table this item until September 2025 Board Meeting.

6.2 Rotation of MWI Branches for Women's Day portion of the AGM Day

Table until November when branch memberships are determined.

6.3 Policy regrading Personal Stories in Newsletter and MWI Website – tabled from March

DISCUSSION: Should MWI have a policy on what's acceptable for personal items in the newsletter.

DECISION: Articles will be included in the newsletter, if they match the mission and vision of MWI. A policy will not be developed unless personal articles become an issue.

DECISION: Articles submitted by members will include a proviso in the newsletter stating the article is submitted by a named member and is their personal opinion and not a view of MWI.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Marketing & Promotions Committee Summer Schedule

On hiatus until September 2025.

7.2 Motion to Destroy Ballots

Motion: Moved by Gisela Nolting to destroy the MWI AGM 2025 mail-in ballots by June 18th, 2025. Seconded by Marge Knutson. **CARRIED**

7.3 MWI Office Summer Coverage

Motion: Moved by Michelle Gurman to close the MWI office from June 30 to September 2, 2025. Financial reports to be reconciled during the second week of each month and emailed to the finance committee. Seconded by Ann Mandziuk. **CARRIED**

ACTION: Mallory to change the office message to notify callers that the office is closed until September 2nd.

ACTION: Debra to update Alpine payroll services about salary changes for the summer.

7.4 Funding for Joy Smith Foundation to present on Trafficking of Youth at Schools across our Branch communities

A discussion came up about the use of MWI's charitable number to access speakers. With a charitable number, we have access to apply for larger grants, then grant funds could be utilized by branches to fulfill the grant requirements.

DISCUSSION: We as a board would have to ensure everything follows MWI mission and vision. The logistics would require provision of MWI's reviewed financial statement. This action does not contravene with anything in our Act, therefore there shouldn't be an issue.

ACTION: Unanimous agree. Debra will write up a letter regarding using our charitable number to access speakers and send to the Board Members for edits and then send to the MWI Membership.

7.5 Proclamation

We received the proclamation in May 2025. Receipt of the Proclamation was delayed due to governmental policy that proclamations are not provided during the election/by election process.

7.6 International Peace Gardens (IPG) Representative Appointment

Liz approached Audrey Clark to see if she'd like to be a representative. Audrey agreed to it. We just need to put forward her name. She's done this before.

ACTION: Liz will notify Audrey Clark that we accept her agreement to be a representative. We will send her a letter and put her reporting expectations in it.

7.7 IPG Communication Expectation with Non-Board Representative

Appointment

MWI has had issues in the past regarding representatives on committees not providing updates or communicating with the board. The result was the person's personal opinions were put forward without any consultation with the MWI board.

DISCUSSION: Representatives shall provide a report at each Board Meeting.

ACTION: Mallory will notify Audrey Clark before each board meeting asking for her IPG report.

7.8 ACWW Canada Area Conference Registration Compensation

Motion: Moved by Marge Knutson to compensate Gisela Nolting for her registration fees, in the amount of \$225.00, for the May 2025 ACWW Canada Area Conference held in British Columbia. Funds to be paid from the Madge Watt Memorial Fund.

Seconded by Michelle Gurman. **CARRIED**

7.9 Finance

Mallory gave a breakdown of expectations throughout the year of monthly/weekly duties.

7.10 Gimli Saga

Diana Bristowe attempted to misappropriate the copyright of the book; have it printed and sell it for her own financial gain. MWI dealt with this issue in 2023. At that time Ms. Bristowe was extremely nasty, making wild accusations about the MWI Board. MWI informed Ms Bristowe that she did not have the copyright, and that any assets held by an MWI branch that disbanded became the property of MWI, according to the ACT. This woman has now contacted the printer saying she bought the copyright. Changed the cover of the book and now has printed this book and is planning to start selling it in Gimli. The issue arose this month because Ms Bristowe has now sent a letter to the Gimli Museum and Gimli library forbidding them from circulating this book for people to read. A woman contacted Mallory because of the issue, suggested that we give the copyright to the Gimli Museum, to ensure the manuscript benefits the Gimli community, and not the individual. Debra instructed the woman to provide further information regarding the issue and when Ms Bristowe claims to have bought the copyright. Ms Bristowe has sent all former Gimli WI members a cease-and-desist letter as well as to the Gimli Museum and Gimli Library.

DECISION: Request Ms Bristowe to send proof of who and when she bought the copyright. She does not have the legal authority to take over the book to sell for her own compensation. Should we contact a lawyer.

MOTION: Moved by Liz Chongva that we retain a lawyer to address Ms Bristowe's claim that she bought copyright and to provide advice on MWI presenting the copyright to the Gimli Museum. Ann Mandziuk seconded. **CARRIED.**

ACTION: Debra will contact a lawyer for guidance and retain legal services if appropriate.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.1 Executive – Debra Barrett

No Executive meeting required from January to May.

8.2 AGM 2025 and MWI Women's Day – Debra Barrett

Thank you to Woodmore was sent to Shelagh Woods. Thank you included in the Newsletter.

8.3 Marketing & Promotion – Ann Mandziuk

No meeting was held in May due to unexpected circumstances; no meetings will be held until September 2025.

8.4 Bylaw & Policy – Debra Barrett

Policies continue to be updated as required. The Bylaw was not updated at AGM 2025 due to the absence of ministerial direction on what constitutes a provincially accepted yearend financial review. The criteria regarding who is acceptable to perform a reviewed yearend financial statement will be updated in the Bylaw as well as any new or amended policies regarding MWI business matters.

8.5 Resolutions – Jacqueline Chartrand

Committee on hiatus until October 2025.

A Committee Chairperson may need to be recruited by September 15th should the Chair's leave of absence continue into the fall.

8.6 Scholarship – Gisela Nolting

Committee members: Gisela Nolting (chair), Dorothy Braun and Sheena Letexier
We received 22 applications from across Manitoba for two scholarships of \$ 1250 each.

The recipients are Abby Sigvaldason and Ethan Corbett.

Abby is from Gimli. She will pursue a Bachelor of Science at the University of Manitoba with the plan to go into the medical field. She hopes to promote her values of equality and diversity through medicine.

Ethan is from Rosser. He will enter the Diploma in Agriculture program at the University of Manitoba. His goal is to take over the family farm and create the most efficient style of farming possible.

ACTION: Mallory will ask Red River Ex if there is a formal banquet for a presentation. How close is MWI are to the next \$10,000 in our account with them to be able to give \$500.00.

8.7 Finance – Marge Knutson

The May 12/25 Finance Meeting was postponed till June 9th/25, due to issued cheques from the AGM had not yet been cleared at the bank. Mileage was not claimed by all Board members for attending the AGM. Mallory renewed our yearly MB Cooperator subscription for a cost of \$45.00.

8.8 International Peace Gardens – Vacant

Recruitment continues for an MWI representative to IPG, an appointment will be voted on at the June board meeting. Should a non-board member be appointed a communication pattern between the board and the IPG rep will need to be developed.

8.9 FWIC – Debra Barrett

The focus of FWIC has been:

- A manual was created to assist provincial boards and branches in creating local programs/activities based on the Textile Sustainability project with a focus to reduce the volume of textiles entering landfills.
- FWIC AGM will be held virtually on July 8, 2025
- Voting delegates: Ann Mandziuk and Liz Chongva
- Next board meeting is June 23rd, 2025

8.10 MB Agriculture – Thelma Blahey

- Manitoba Agriculture has been busy with issues of wildfire, lack of rain and trade/tariff issues.
- The Deputy Minister recently visited the rural offices of Beausejour, Gimli and Arborg. She appreciated being able to meet people face to face.
- Be sure to check out the rural fairs in your area of the province.

8.11 Agriculture & Rural Development – Gisela Nolting

There is a growing concern about the lack of moisture.

Manitoba is actively working to reduce interprovincial trade barriers through both legislation and agreements with other provinces. Manitoba recently passed the Fair Trade in Canada Act (Bill47) and has signed memorandums of understanding with Ontario to improve the flow of goods, services and workers.

Manitoba is also part of the New West Partnership Trade Agreement with B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Manitoba also participates in the Canadian Free Trade Agreement which ensures the free movement of persons goods, services and investments within Canada.

8.12 Nomination – Liz Chongva

A committee must be struck for the 2026 AGM to replace outgoing board members. Nominations were discussed at AGM 2025 with members reminded to bring forth possible persons of interest in board positions.

8.13 Strategic Plan – Debra Barrett

The Committee continues to review the plan to ensure compliance.

8.14 Made in Manitoba Project – Michelle Gurman

MWI is receiving positive feedback on our social media posts.

Posts have focused on the theme “get out and have fun”.

8.15 Restructuring Committee – Debra Barrett

Committee on hiatus.

8.16 ACWW – Gisela Nolting

My report about the ACWW Canada Area Conference is in the June-July 2025 M.W.I. newsletter. There is also a report from Lynn MacLean in the June 2025 W.I. Connections.

The next Triennial World Conference will be in Ottawa from April 26 – May 1, 2026.

Registration is now open. Early bird rates are 1279 English Pounds for Twin sharing and 1699 for a single room. Early bird rates are until Aug. 31, 2025. Standard rates are from Sep. 1, - Oct. 31, 2025. Twin sharing 1410 and single room at 1869, all rates in English Pounds. The conference is “all inclusive”. You have to buy the whole package. For detailed information please visit the website.

The last coordinators meeting was in May. We discussed advocacy. Before the UN was founded, ACWW sat on the Nutrition Committee of the League of Nations. Today ACWW holds Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council, known as ECOSOC, based in New York. ACWW also has associate status with UNESCO, consultative status with FAO, UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

9. In-Camera Session

Next Board Meeting Date: September 24th, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. with a view to setting meeting dates for the start of the fall session and determining committee chairpersons.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn moved by Michelle Gurman. Meeting adjourned by Debra Barrett at 10:45 a.m.

ACTION ITEMS IN MINUTES:

ACTION: Think we should leave it and see how it develops to see if we get more submissions. We will not be developing a newsletter policy at this point.

ACTION: Mallory to change the office message to notify callers that the office is closed until September 2nd.

ACTION: Debra to update Alpine payroll services about salary changes for the summer.

ACTION: Unanimous agree. **Debra** will write up a letter regarding using our charitable number to access speakers and send to the Board Members for edits and then send to the MWI Membership.

ACTION: **Liz** will notify Audrey Clark that we accept her agreement to be a representative. We will send her a letter and put her reporting expectations in it.

ACTION: **Mallory** will notify Audrey Clark before each board meeting asking for her IPG report.

ACTION: **Mallory** will ask Red River Ex if there is a formal banquet for a presentation. How close we are to the next \$10,000 in our account with them to be able to give \$500.00.

ACTION: **Debra** will contact a lawyer for guidance and retain legal services if appropriate.