



Children, Play and Nature Standing Committee Minutes

When: June 28 3:00P.M. E.S.T.

Where: Internet web conference (GoToMeeting)

Attendees: Helena Bjarnegard (Co-chair), Digby Whyte (CEO), Anya Gregory(EO), Angela Wright, Amowi Phillips

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Helena introduces herself, and prompts new members to do the same.
- Digby introduces himself and his background in park administration
- Angela (new member) introduces herself. Her professional background is in nature parks in Queensland. Spent the last 35 years in local government doing policy work.
- Amowi (new member) spends her time split between the united states and Ghana. She is an educator and attorney. Works with the Mmofra foundation in Ghana, which deals with the enrichment of children outside of the school context. Employing the outdoor museum model. She advocates for green space and making the public space more child-friendly. Her work in the intersection of children and nature in Ghana is why she is excited to be a member of this committee. The small model of park-space in the city of Accra is still revolutionary to Africa, which still doesn't have the nexus of nature-play in cities.
- Digby outlines the World Urban Parks Committees function and organization. He specifies that it is an international organization with a membership of 75 cities and organizations. World Urban parks is only 2 years old, but has a large board and executive committee. The main goal is to have an advocacy portfolio- one that is promoting change.

QUESTIONS:

- Amowi questions the definition of play.
- Helena details that they are based on the UN definitions but that Julie (absent for this meeting) is working more deeply on these definitions.
- Amowi questions how play can be culturally specific, and how the reality of play and how people think about play in Ghanese culture is possibly different.
- Helena agrees to include Amowi on an email conversation about this to be continued later.
- Discussion about the parallels of the word play and theatre – there are parallels with the english word and the Ghanese word ' agoro' – which similarly means play/performance/theatre. The parallels make Amowi comfortable with the terminology.

- Angela brings up the use of the word unstructured which is often used in combination with the word-play.

MOTIONS:

- Motion to approve TOR (Terms of Reference): Motion carried by consensus providing we add:
 - o ' foster and engage an international network” as a part of objectives
 - o Create alliance or partnerships – add to number 2 of objectives
 - o Be open to changing the definition of play if needed after the whole group has discussed it further.

NETWORKS:

- Helena suggests that if any of the committee members know of any networks that might be useful, that they should reach out. There may be networks or groups that are experiencing the same issues that we are which could be useful.

MOU's:

- Digby – describes how MOU's work. Digby discusses how the use of a Memorandum of Understanding can help the WUP to create partnerships. Digby puts forth the question to the group, what kinds of organizations do you know about that we may consider collaborating with?
- MOU's are used for advocacy and action support. The incentive for other organizations is a reciprocal membership and discounts for conferences.
- Digby suggests the International Play Association as a potential partner.
- Another is the Children and Nature Network of the US (nce they have a very large network).
- Helena suggests making a list of these organizations through the email thread.
- Angela suggests the International Organization for Play and Safety as a possible partner.
- Amowi suggests the Project for Public Spaces group? Wondering if it is related. Angela details that their work is more in city plazas and place-making and does not relate specifically to nature and children. Digby suggests that they would be a better fit for another committee in WUP.
- Angela wonders about writing policy frameworks and suggests a partnership with an organization that deals with these frameworks could be beneficial.

Updates on EVENTS:

- Helena mentioned that Amanda went to a conference in Vancouver (Children and Nature Network conference). Helena mentions that there are a few videos and links that can be circulated about this conference.
- Amsterdam conference attended by Amanda and Amowi. There were tips for engagement with policy makers and worthwhile presentations.
- Greater and Greener conference coming up.. Digby asks if anyone is attending?
- Digby: the goal with future events is to attend conferences, and present the committee through our expertise.

- Amowi is attending the city summit in Tel Aviv in September, she is speaking about the practices in Ghana.
- Angela attending the Healthy Cities conference in a few weeks.
- Helena mentions that for future presentations she is making a Powerpoint presentation that everyone can contribute to so that we have a guideline
- Helena discusses the need to make a good practices list as well as a definitions list (currently underway).

Work Plan

- Helena mentions that we are currently in the process of putting together a draft plan of activities for the committee. She puts the question to the group: “ What is the most important thing that this network should achieve?” Helena to incorporate comments into the plan.

Social media presence:

- Digby mentions WUP's social media presence. Wuparks.socialmedia@gmail.com – Sandra is the social media coordinator, if you have any events or research or articles that pertain to the committee or WUP in general please send them to her.

Next meeting(s):

- Motion to set up meeting for September. Everyone agrees that we need more time between meetings. Action: Co-Chairs will set up a meeting schedule and send it around to the group.