

Minutes of WGPO Board Meeting 9/8/25

1. Call to Order (Laurie)

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm Eastern time. All Board Members (Laurie Cohen, Bennett Jacobstein, Josh Greenway, Jan Cardia, John Karris, William Cody and Shan Abbasi) were in attendance.

2. 2026 Word Cup Update (Bennett)

- Within the next few weeks, Bennett and Laurie will visit the Williamsburg venue to assess the playing room layout and explore options for food and social activities
- Josh will prepare a list of questions for Laurie and Bennett to ask the venue's Event Coordinator, including the best audio solution for tournament announcements
- A 2026 Word Cup Planning Committee will be created to better manage planning and logistics, the prize pool and streaming commentary
- The Word Cup Planning Committee will discuss audio-visual issues with the technology team
- The Memorandum of Understanding with CoCo will be updated
- Bennett will coordinate with Deborah Komatsu to update the existing Word Cup website

3. Annual Awards (Bennett)

- Bennett and Shan will lead a task force to develop a proposal for recognizing performance achievements and volunteer contributions to WGPO

4. Communication Update (Shan)

- Shan is working on a communication update
- Email capabilities, website management and content generation will be reviewed with the Technology Committee

5. 2026 Financial Update (Jan)

- Jan is finalizing the 2026 Budget, which will likely include \$79,500 for Prize Pool contributions, \$10,000 for School Scrabble, \$10,000 for professional fees and insurance, and \$500 for miscellaneous expenses

- Most merchant bank fees (Paypal) will be charged to members who choose to use methods of payment that generate bank fees; players will be encouraged to use methods of payment that do not incur fees
- Prize Pool contributions have been scaled back to address the increase in expenses, lack of income growth, and additional tournaments
- Preliminary decisions about Prize Pool contributions have been made to ensure that directors of tournaments being held in early 2026 can secure venues and properly plan
- A formal process for Prize Pool contributions will be developed and implemented no later than the 2027 fiscal year
- The WGPO Board will explore ways to generate additional income, including more fundraisers and sponsorships
- Jan will provide the final proposed 2026 Budget via email (along with information from the 2024 and 2025 Budgets) so that it can be formally approved at the next Board meeting
- A Budget Summary will be provided at the the upcoming Annual Meeting

6. Rules and WOW Definitions (Laurie)

- The Rules Committee is finalizing the rules document, with Jan reviewing content and identifying areas for clarification
- The Dictionary Committee is finalizing definitions for ULU, and ensuring that slurs are identified as slurs

7. New Business

- An upcoming WGPO tournament in Galesburg is being promoted by the town's mayor (Peter Schwartzman) and will include a live stream featuring local interviews

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30 pm Eastern Time.