

AMWA Mid-America Chapter Meeting of January 7, 2025 — version with balances

Call to order: 4:30 pm

Attendees (alphabetical): Lisa Balbes, Rebecca Bigelow, Alysia Drummond, Joanne McAndrews, Heather McNeill, Diane Morton, Leslie Neistadt, Matt Sandbulte, Sunali Wadehra, Heather Widmayer, Terra White

Introductions

Matt opened the meeting by welcoming Terra White, who was recommended by Heather Widmayer to help arrange the member events in Iowa. Terra works for Quest Diagnostics as a medical writer. She became an AMWA member 6 years ago when she was hired at Quest Diagnostics.

Approval of minutes

Minutes from the January 2025 meeting were reviewed and approved by the members attending. Lisa motioned to approve the minutes, several seconded, and all other attendees were in favor.

AREA REPORTS

Events in St. Louis

Reporting: Lisa Balbes

The next STL area meeting is March 12 – Managing Workplace Stress, presented by James RW Linsin, PsyD, Clinical Psychologist. Twelve people are registered. He asked for people to share scenarios for him to address.

Upcoming 2025 St. Louis Meeting Schedule

2025 Events

May 14 - The Third Age: How Tech Writers Plan and Enjoy Their Golden Years, presented by Dana Delibovi

July 9 - What Do Geeks Do For Fun Around Here?, presented by Alice Fugate

September 10 – Managing Difficult Clients and Coworkers, presented by Sunali Wadehra

November 12 – Best and Worst Books of 2025, presented by Leslie Neistadt

All meetings are held at Sunny Street Cafe, 11692 Manchester Road, Des Peres, MO from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. The meeting space is reserved for all 2025 meeting dates.

Events in Iowa

Reporting: Terra White

- Terra sent an email to the local chapter (4 responses so far to the 8 members on the roster) to hold an event in the area, date in April TBD.

Events in Kansas City

Reporting: Alysia Drummond

- Alysia reported that she reached out to a couple members in the Kansas City area to explore a coordinating committee to plan KC area events. So far no one has replied, so Alysia will reach out with an invitation for a spring meet-and-greet event in the area.

Events in Nebraska

Reporting by email: Rebecca Bigelow (unable to attend), Matt updated

- Rebecca reported that 6 people attended the Nebraska area event on January 28, 2025, with great engagement. Matt will be in Nebraska in April and Rebecca will try to arrange an event while he is there.

Events in Kansas

Reporting: Matt Sandbulte

- No events to report.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Reporting: Leslie Neistadt

Bank account balances as of February 28, 2025, were reported by Leslie. Leslie reminded that the chapter will pay for one event in each region of our chapter during the year.

COMMUNICATIONS

Reporting: Jessica Kiser (absent)

Matt reminded everyone to send any news items for the next newsletter, and anything to share on LinkedIn. Matt will share the virtual meeting planned for April 9 to be included in the next newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP

Reporting: Heather McNeill

Since the last report:

- Current active membership in the MidAmerica AMWA chapter is 103 members and one new member.
- Heather says she is still getting members from outside the area, but she directs them to affiliate with their regional chapter.

CAC (Chapter Advisory Council)

Reporting: Sunali Wadehra

The CAC group met in February. Sunali will email the PowerPoint presentation to the group. AMWA has their strategic planning committee working on a new plan for AMWA. The last plan was written 10 years ago. AMWA national committee will be working with chapter leaders to develop the way forward. Discussion surrounded how to develop virtual connections outside of geographical boundaries for chapter membership. Leslie and Joanne will be in focus groups to help direct strategic work. Matt encouraged everyone to share ideas with Sunali or anyone in a focus group.

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing from the previous meeting was discussed except to continue virtual meeting planning for 2025.

NEW BUSINESS

Meeting 1 Q1 2025/Wednesday, April 9, 2025 12 pm CST

Breakthrough and Fresh Starts series

Volunteer to share about medical writing paths

- Heather Widmayer – academic
- Sunali Wadehra – freelance
- Angela Schwab –regulatory (EZ Research Solutions)

Matt offered that people could share slides (optional) with 15-minute time constraints for the speakers to stay within the lunch hour. Lisa suggested breakout rooms for the speakers for the last 15 minutes to allow for more in-depth discussion. Matt will ensure that Angela Schwab is still available to join because she is outside of the Mid-America Chapter membership.

Meeting 2 Q2 2025/early June

June 4, 2025 12 pm CST TENTATIVE date and time

Rebecca recommended after June 3 because of an ASCO meeting that could be attended by some who would potentially attend a virtual MidAmerica event.

Diane will assist Matt with reaching out to secure a speaker for this virtual event.

Virtual meeting topics that have been suggested

Joanne suggested topics by AMWA members who present on broad topics of value to membership

Editing your own work, Hope Lafferty

Proofreading, Susan Aiello

Art of writing, Crystal Herron

Statistics, Tom Lang

Meeting 3 Q3 2025/August TENTATIVE

Next Chapter Meeting

May 6, 4:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.