

Quarterly Board Meeting Minutes –May 5, 2019
4:30pm to 6:30pm Conference Call
Dial In: 712-770-8028 Conference Code: 918945

Attendees: Joey Bibeau, Jean Cannon, Tony Conner, Martin Lalonde, Jane Sandberg, Judith Selin, Chris Sumner, Lauren Wooden

Agenda

Approval of Minutes for January 20, 2019 Board Conference Call

Lauren Wooden made a motion to accept the minutes; Chris Sumner seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report –

Chris reported that the VWS finances are in good order. Lauren's work on collecting dues for 2019 means that we are very far ahead compared to recent years. Thank you, Lauren. Expenditures for the year are low with only two major outlays so far.

Payment for the Spring Juror has been sent.

Payments for upcoming Hub activities are in process – payment for Susan Abbott and for rental of a church hall.

Directors' Reports Review

Director of Hubs:

Jane asked for feedback on the updated Hub guide. General opinions were highly favorable. Thank you to Jane for updating the Hub Guide.

Jane also recommended changing the the title of "Hub Point Person" to "Hub Leader". A short discussion followed with all expressed opinions in agreement.

Jane made motion to change the title from "Hub Point Person" to "Hub Leader" with the condition that the Hub Point Persons do not object. Jean seconded. Motion passed.

Jane brought up the issue of Hub funding. Tony mentioned that the agenda included a proposed formula for the new Hub structure later in the agenda. Chris added that the proposed formula included provisions that were not passed a the Fall 2018 Members meeting. It was agreed to postpone discussion until later in the meeting.

Jane brought up the issue of Hub expenses and reimbursement. The current form/process seems unwieldy and could be streamlined a bit. Chris offered to create a new form and send to Jane for feedback.

Discussion re: Opening Hub Events to Non-Hub members. Jane state that, currently, Hubs open events to the entire membership 30 days prior to the event. And that

notification takes place via the email newsletter. Tony asked if Hubs are planning that far in advance. Jane affirmed that they are and that this system seems to be working well as is.

Jane would like for the Hubs to have signs/posters for Hub events and will look into printing costs. Tony mentioned that Lori Peckham is available for graphic design work for VWS.

Will the updated Hub guide be offered digitally or in print form? Cost is a factor for printed versions. Jane will investigate cost of printing Hub guides.

Exhibitions Director – Jean Cannon

The VWS Spring Show is set for May 18 – June 30th, at the Southern Vermont Art Center in Manchester, Vermont. Jean is pleased with the number of entries for this show versus recent exhibits. Judith made the point that the weekly reminders of the upcoming deadline were a good idea and may have helped increase submission

Artshow Manager created difficulties for many people this year. There were problems both with submitting work and paying the fee once submitted. In addition, Jean's physical address is wrong in the system and there is no way to access the profile to change it. Jean is unhappy with this system and does not want to continue to use it for VWS exhibit submissions. Discussion ensued regarding other possibilities including OnlineJuriedShows.com and café.com. Options will be researched and new system chosen for the Fall show.

Jean would like to have a short amount of time to speak at the Spring Meeting to make a pitch for a Co-Director of Exhibitions.

Program Director – Joey Bibeau

The Spring Meeting agenda is set. The highlight of the meeting will be the marketing presentation by Nancy Stone. Joey will make time on the agenda for Jean to ask for a Co-Director of Exhibitions. Our workshop instructor, Andy Evansen, will be doing a painting demo in the afternoon.

Joey will send info for an email reminder of the meeting to Judith in mid-May.

The Andy Evansen workshop is full with sixteen attendees and there are three people on the waiting list.

VWS Website Update Status

Tony reviewed work and progress on the website to date. The home page and all sub-pages have been designed/built with a clean new look, navigation has been simplified and the underlying file structure has been cleaned up and simplified.

The homepage includes a slide show that pulls images from those loaded by the members for their own member pages.

There is a working version of the new site on Squarespace but it is not “live” and can only be accessed by those authorized. Tony has an authorized id and has asked Natasha about sharing with the rest of the Board. Will let you know when he hears back.

Lauren has had non-members joining using the members renewal page/button on the current site which makes things confusing for her. Tony will make sure that the new site is clear in separating renewals from new memberships.

Jean asked about how the site is pulling the images, and asked about image sizes. Tony responded that the software is pulling only images that are less than a certain size to insure fast loading. Revision of the members gallery will be a separate project that will be taken up after the new site is live. As the new gallery is built, we will make clear image size and proportion requirements to all members.

Joey asked if the new site will be set up to take payments for workshops, events etc. Tony replied that it will and that it is a goal for the site to take payments for as many different things – via Paypal – as possible. Currently, Tony sets up the payments and payment buttons for the website through Paypal.

It was asked if there is a backup webmaster for the VWS site. Tony confirmed that there is.

Hub Funding Proposal

Tony developed a new proposal for funding Hubs – below.

PROPOSED method for 2020: Four Hubs - \$300/hub + \$15 per Hub current paid member (excl. students) as of July 31, 2019

Burlington/St Albans – 52 : total funding \$1,500 (1 student mem - did not merge)
Central/Northeast – 35 : total funding \$1,075(20 student mems - previously 2 hubs)
Connecticut River – 73 : total funding \$2060 (0 student mems - previously 3 hubs)
Westside – 28 : total funding \$900 (1 student mem - previously 2 hubs)
TOTAL FUNDED : \$5,500

In addition to funding formula, proposal includes three other provisions to promote participation by all VWS Members.

- 1) Hub Activities open to all Members if event is not “filled” by two weeks before event date
- 2) All Hub funds un-spent and un-encumbered as of Sept 30 are released into a funding pool that can be used by any Hub by the end of the current year.
- 3) Un-spent and un-encumbered Hub funds on 12/31/19 are divided as follows: ½ remaining amount is allocated to the I Can Paint program; remaining ½ is added to budgeted funds for each hub in the following year.

Discussion of the proposal generally favorable. Chris pointed out that provision #2 had been rejected at the fall meeting and suggested that current Hub policy allowing non-Hub members to attend events really eliminated the need for this provision. There was general agreement on this point.

There was also discussion on provision 3, specifically limiting carry-over funds to one year, so that carry over funds from 2019 must be spent in 2020.

After the discussion, a motion was made by Chris to accept the proposal with the elimination of provision 2 and the modification of provision 3 limiting carry-over to one year. Jean seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

2020 Open Regional Exhibit Update

Per the written status update, Tony, emphasized that the expected venue for the 2020 Open Regional Exhibit is in jeopardy. Southern Vermont College, owner of the Laumeister Center, is closing its' doors at the end of this semester. The Laumiester Center is currently closed and is one of the College assets that is listed for sale. It is a unique property with a very limited number of potential buyers.

Discussion followed with general agreement on the following points:

- For a fall 2020 exhibition the venue must be set no later than late fall 2019
- It is, obviously, impossible to predict when the property will transfer to a new owner
- The Festival Gallery in Waitsfield can serve as a fallback for a VWS Members show in Fall 2020 if need be
- Board should consider postponing the Open Regional until 2021

After discussion, it was agreed that Tony would keep Board up to date with any relevant info between now and the July meeting. Based on whatever is known at the July meeting, the Board will discuss and make a decision on how to move forward with the Open Regional Exhibit.

Member List Update/Database Purge

Due to Lauren's good work, the current membership list is up to date in terms of identifying everyone who is and wants to remain a member. There is a small number of members who have not paid since 2016 or before. Lauren would like to purge the list of these members. A spreadsheet with these members info will be created in case records need to be accessed in the future.

Lauren reports that the Member database software, FileMaker Pro, has been inflexible and difficult to change. For example, the fields set up to note the members Hub was done with the old structure and cannot be changed. Current Hub membership lists are difficult to produce as a result. Database system needs to be replaced or updated to eliminate these issues.

Also, Lauren would like the database to accessible to any other Director who needs access to the info or to run a specialized report. Since the software resides on a local laptop, remote access is impossible.

Lauren would like to look into replacing the current database with another that has more flexibility, and will allow for multi-user access.

Tony will ask Natasha if she has experience with databases or can refer to another party who does.

Judith mentioned that the Constant Contact database used for Member emails is also difficult. It does not match Lauren's member database and is also difficult to manage.

At the end of the discussion, Board agreed with proposed Member database purge.

Open Discussion

Jean attended a recent Connecticut River Hub event. She came away impressed with the energy of the group and their plans for the future. The old Brattleboro Hub has an exhibit up the West Village Meeting House.

Next Board Meeting

Dates for the next Board meeting were discussed. That meeting will be an in person meeting at the Gifford Medical Center in Randolph VT.

The Board settled on Sunday, July 14th, 12:30pm to 4:30pm.

At 6:22, a motion to adjourn was made by Martin and seconded by Chris.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Tony Conner, President**