

Northlands Storytelling Network Board Meeting

August 25, 2004

Edgewater Hotel, Madison

Treasurer's report

Not all good news. Less money taken in than budgeted. More expenses. Impacts our further planning regarding conference (meals, workshops, etc)

July 1, 2003-June 30, 2004

Bottom line-we've lost money the past two years. Karen has explored grant possibilities through foundations. Because we're a membership organization, we can't get grants for Karen's salary.

Board meetings were more expensive when the losses started occurring.

Jen points out that Youth Voices could be granted, just not Karen's salary.

Jen raises the point that we need to look at where we want our money spent. Karen sees that food is one of our biggest expenses.

Greg suggests pulling out the food part, and paying only the registration for presenters.

Mike feels that that discussion should be a conference committee recommendation.

Mike decides it's not a conference committee issue, as it is so important to whether we are a viable organization. Karen adds that any money issue should be a board, rather than committee decision.

Karen points out that when the dinner was included, participants didn't complain about meal costs

Greg brings up the issue of keeping it "fair," since the call already went out and offered food as part of the deal.

Food costs would outweigh the \$50 a presenter gets.

Mike wonders if raising conference costs is something we need to look at. Also asks about the firmness of the costs for next year. Food costs are likely to go up by conference time.

Discussion regarding how to arrange fees. Don points out he was given the day's conference fee for the day only that he presented. Suggests that conference fee is waived, but you pay for food.

Mike expressed that he has had similar thoughts. Northlands is very generous.

After further comment and discussion by all, it was generally agreed that we need to stick with what the call promised.

Through 12-31-2004 \$30

Through 12-31-2004 postmark-- up to three years membership for pre-2005 rate, locked in

As of 1-1-2005 \$40 per year

Jen points out another budget issue--approximately 40 people were not here the entire conference, yet we ended up paying for meals not eaten.

Mike figures that we spent about \$75 a head for food for people who didn't eat.

Don moves to accept the treasurer's report.

Mike seconded.

Motion passed to accept treasurer's report after much insightful discussion and thoughts for ideas to be more fiscally responsible.

Don raises his regrets regarding the conflict of our conference with Passover. He asks if there's anything he can offer to help for those who might still wish to come. Judy and Jenifer state that sending a letter of regret is the best we can do. Seders are such a family thing and there really isn't a replacement per se.

III. Grants--

Steve requests looking at Frazee Arts Association. Karen checks the specification from last year's grant, which was to cover the hall rental. That is apparently the intent again in this request, looking at the proposed budget. Board votes to deny the grant request.

LaCrosse Storytelling Festival

Jen likes that they are looking at self-sufficiency. Reasonable budget, not trying to shoot for the moon. We haven't granted them before.

Steve comments that they have not listed just where the money is to be spent.

Yvonne asks if we can display Northlands material here as well.

Board votes to grant the full \$250. Motion passed with Gwyn and Don abstaining.

Don moves request using the logo, and require the name and website. Judy seconds. Motion passed.

Riverbend Festival

Margie asks for free discussion before a motion. Money was granted last year to the Festival in the amount of \$300.

Discussion follows. Board members express concern that the event pays high fees to "big name tellers" they've already booked and plans to run a deficit. Not that this is the intent on the part of the organization, but that they have created a deficit over the past two years.

Board votes to deny grant.

Fred Bertchold-Request for grant money for People to People South Africa trip.

Discussion centered around whether or not the grant meets our grant requirements.

Board votes to deny grant request.

(Note-The grant requirements state that a single person cannot be granted. Grants are intended for more in the way of helping storytelling events "get off the ground.")

IV. Committee reports

Conference. Jenifer Ivinkas Strauss, Kevin Strauss, Mary Schmidt, Don Falkos, Gwyn Calvetti, Greg Weiss, Karen Wollscheid, Yvonne Healy.

Concerts-problem solving to get ideas to promote the concert to the community. Theme---vague notion of "hands" somehow. The variety of workshop proposals was extremely strong. 70 proposals from 46 presenters. Need to look at variety and quality. We should stick to only 90 minute workshops for Saturday in order to have the most variety with less tracks.

Bylaw. Need to re-examine this. Karen would like to tackle this. Steve Marriott volunteers as a "career bureaucrat" to be part of this.

V. Email decision making policy-

Steve requests a policy of this that the by-laws will allow. Steve and Karen will develop this policy for the November meeting.

VI. Possible new role for state reps

Karen thinks these people could share more about board activities and decision making, allowing the members to feel more connected to the group. Her proposal is that the state reps become more communicative with the membership.

VII. Concert policies; time limits, submission guidelines

Board discussed the fact that we don't seem to be enforcing our own submission guidelines for concerts. Last year, even though we limit submissions to 12 minutes, several stories exceeded that minimum on stage. Board discussed options.

- 1) Minimum of 45 minutes worth of story
- 2) Broaden the story length requirements

Margie suggests that the conference committee hash this out and bring it back to the board. Combining the Friday concerts might help avoid over run with the break. No vote right now.

August 28, 2004

Meeting called to order at 8:42 am. Lots of page shuffling as the ratings and workshop proposals are reviewed.

Discussion started with number of slots being offered on Saturday--cost saving measure. Board decides that we aim for no more than 18 workshops.

Discussion: Karen points out that there were several workshops last year with very low attendance. Motion passes.

Some discussion was held about the changes in proposal selection for workshops. With everyone viewing the proposals now, it has been recommended that any board members who have proposals on the table should leave the room during that discussion.

Karen says that she and Steve should work on policies and a policy manual, which will be presented at the November meeting for a discussion and a vote.

It was determined that any board members who were present leave the room during discussion of whether or not to accept their proposals, allowing for free discussion.

Don suggests that to help workshop proposal submitters, the evaluation form is available in advance of the submission, to allow them to have a better sense of what the criteria will be. Greg also says that encouraging folks to have someone else read over their proposals for clarity may be helpful.

Evaluation/call for proposals

Discussion about whether or not to review the proposal for comments to go back to the submitter. Consensus was to not share this information unless that person specifically requests it. Karen feels that removing the "comments" statements removed from public access is necessary. This goes along with the idea that they will ask only if they want to know.

References--Greg suggests

- *including references for both this workshop
- *any other types of workshops.

*Any other information that should be shared. For example, maybe no references about the workshop are available, but the presenter has applied this model in their work experience, that might be germane to our decision considerations.

Conference theme--Hands Across the Northlands