

## **Minutes For Northlands Storytelling Network Board of Directors Meeting**

YMCA Camp Algonquin, near Hastings, MI

Friday, Nov. 12, 2004

Meeting convened at 7:35 p.m.

-Tina accepted the minutes as presented, Yvonne seconded, motion passed

-Yvonne and Greg reported that they each send email newsletters to their state members and they encouraged all state representatives to do the same. Board decided that whenever a state rep sends a letter to members, they should send an email copy to Karen and other state reps, as a way of encouraging every state rep to send out a state-specific newsletter.

-Mike made a motion that state reps should communicate with their members after each meeting. Tina seconded, passed unanimously.

\*Board may need to work out a fast way for reps to get board-approved minutes from the secretary.

Motion by Kevin, seconded by Yvonne, that the conference committee work out details for a process in which Karen can remove names from workshops and assign code numbers. The first reading of workshop proposals will be "blind" and could involve judges from outside of the board. After scores are tallied, then Karen will put the names back on the proposals for final evaluation by the board at our August meeting.

If board members submit workshops, since the first reading is blind, they will be on a more even footing with the rest of the members. At the August meeting, any board member who submits a workshop proposal will have to leave the room when his or her proposal is being discussed.

-(appointed board member terms) There seemed to be some confusion as to the length of appointed board member terms. In practice, terms have been 1 year appointments, even though it appears that the bylaws had listed them as being two-year terms.

Kevin motioned and Greg seconded that we will revise the bylaws to state what we have been doing in practice for years: appointed board positions last one year and state rep positions last two years.

-(grant reviews)

The board approved a \$300 grant to Ellis Elementary School of Round Lake, IL for the purchase of a "storytelling library" for the school's storytelling club. The money comes with the provision that if the club should fold, the books will revert to the school library. The vote was 8-1.

The board approved a \$250 advertising grant for Allerton Park of Monticello, IL in support of their "Stories of Love" weekend of storytelling and workshops at the park. The grant requires that the Northlands logo, website and the conference date appear on all promotional materials. The votes passed 7-1 with one abstention.

We adjourned the regular meeting for "check-in" at 10:21 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 13, 2004

Meeting convened at 8:40 a.m.

Board held a lengthy discussion about budget issues and how to balance our budget. We reviewed various scenarios of how to raise conference fees to they are at least covering our costs.

Meeting adjourned at around 12:00 noon for committee meetings and lunch.

Meeting reconvened at 7:45 p.m.

-(Duck Support Committee) The committee reported that they reviewed Karen's contract and proposed a salary increase from \$12 per hour to \$14 per hour for the 2005-2006 fiscal year. Board agreed that we are lucky to get

someone as skilled as Karen at that economical rate. The board also discussed if we could give Karen a more immediate raise, even though she asked the committee to do no such thing. After discussion about how difficult it would be to do that, the board agreed to follow our Duck's advice.

-(Budget) The board approved our 2004-2005 budget after extensive tinkering. Our goal is to have conference fees cover the cost of the conference.

Mike stated that if we have another year where conference fees are not covering conference expenses, we need to take some drastic steps like revising the compensation for presenters and canceling the budget line item for board meetings. In January, the board will revisit the idea of presenter compensation, given the tighter economic times for all arts nonprofits.

Greg moved that we accept the 2004-2005 budget as amended. Colleen seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Budget is as follows:

### **2004/2005 Budget**

#### **Income**

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Cash Forward        | 3,500         |
| Conference Fees     | 24,500        |
| Donations           | 450           |
| Concerts            | 125           |
| Interest Dividends  | 350           |
| Meal Tickets        | 275           |
| Membership          | 5,500         |
| Book Store          | 5,000         |
| <b>Total Income</b> | <b>39,700</b> |

#### **Expenses**

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Advertising             | 250           |
| Board Meetings          | 1,500         |
| Book Store              | 2,500         |
| Business Manager        | 6,000         |
| Credit Card Fees        | 550           |
| Food for Conference     | 12,000        |
| Grants Awarded          | 2,500         |
| Insurance               | 281           |
| Postage                 | 2,600         |
| Presenter Fees          | 1,550         |
| President Discretionary | 500           |
| Printing                | 3,000         |
| Space Rental-Conference | 2,500         |
| Storage                 | 183           |
| Supplies                | 1,300         |
| Taxes                   | 10            |
| Telephone               | 350           |
| Website                 | 100           |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>   | <b>37,674</b> |

**Net Income/Expenses**                      **2,026**

The meeting adjourned at 10:16 p.m., although some people had checked out before that time.

Sunday, Nov. 14, 2004

Meeting convened at 9:50 a.m.

-Announced that next year's August board meeting is scheduled for Aug 19-21. The location has not been determined.

-Steve, chairman of the bylaws committee announced that editing of the bylaws is ongoing.

Conference Reports

-Greg will provide ceramic tiles of "hands" (part of our conference theme) as a fundraiser, he will also work with Karen to use that graphic for the conference brochure as well

-(Workshops) Jenifer said that the conference committee will contact an alternate presenter since one chosen presenter cannot attend

-(Concerts) Kevin reported that we will have four concerts at the conference this year. We will have the 5/5/5 concert on Thursday night again. We will also have teen/adult concerts on Friday and Saturday nights and a family matinee concert on Sunday afternoon. The marketing and concert committees will be marketing the Friday-Sunday concerts as the "Midwest StoryFest" as a way of attracting local residents to the event. People wanting to perform in one of the concert can submit two stories to Karen in the same format as previous years. Tapes will be due Feb. 1. If we don't receive "enough high quality" submissions, then we will put out a second call for tapes. The conference committee agreed that calling in "stringers" with personal invitations to select individuals to fill out a "weak" concert causes several problems that we would rather avoid.

The board decided that the fee for the Sunday matinee concert will be included in the regular conference fee.

-(Marketing) Yvonne reported that the marketing committee will be targeting three markets this year: 1) Northlands members 2) the media 3) the general public.

Yvonne handed out card flyers for board members to spread around at Tellabration events and other storytelling events where we are not performing. Yvonne is working on producing "conference business cards" that we can hand out to people all over the region.

Yvonne reminded the board that given the tough economic times, the fact that Northlands is maintaining their numbers at the conference is a big deal. We are much better off than other arts organizations.

Tina volunteered to look into getting us "board pins" to help identify us as Northlands Board members at the conference and other storytelling events.

Hardy is working on a Midwest StoryFest logo, using portions of the Northlands Logo.

Kevin is writing up press releases for the conference and story fest.

Discussed the possibility of allowing people to buy concert tickets ahead of time online. Hardy will look into whether we can add a Paypal account to our website to do this. Purchasers would receive a receipt for their payment that they could show at the door to receive their ticket.

-(other conference business)

Greg offered to put together host bags.

Mary is handling the swaps.

Board members, and anyone else that we can rope in, should be ready starting at noon on Thursday to cover details like signs and other last minute excitement

Board decided that we will have a “Breakfast with the Board” panel on Saturday or Sunday morning. This will take the place of some of the “membership meeting” that we used to have at dinner on Saturday night. It will also provide a place where members can ask questions of the board. Kevin will gather a list of questions that people have been asking us about Northlands and how we are doing things these days. Kevin will also assemble a list of “talking points” for board members to clearly explain the decisions that the board has made over the past two years.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 7-9, 2005 (Happy New Year) in northern Illinois. Karen has a line on a YMCA camp that we can use. I hope to see you all there.