

Northlands Storytelling Network
Board of Directors Meeting
January 12-14, 2007
Minutes

Friday 1/12/07 –Gruenhagen Conference Center, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, WI
Called to Order 8:55 pm by President Kevin Strauss

- Board of Directors present were:
 - Officers:

President – Kevin Strauss	President Elect - Greg Weiss
Vice President - Gwyn Calvetti	Treasurer - Tina Rohde
Secretary - Yvonne Healy	
 - State Representatives:

Minnesota - Katie Knutson	Wisconsin/ Webmaster - Hardy Garrison
Michigan - Dick Strader	Iowa – Steve Marriott arrived 1/13/07.
 - Appointed Directors:

Don Falkos	Colleen Shaskin
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 - Business Manager:

	Karen Wolscheid
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- Committee rosters are:
 - President is member of all committees.
 - Long Range Planning: Steve Marriott, Karen Wolscheid, Jenifer Strauss, Yvonne Healy.
 - Staff Support: Don Falkos, Tina Rohde, Colleen Shaskin, Greg Weiss
 - Executive Committee: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Past President
 - Webmaster: Hardy Garrison
 - Membership: all State Representatives plus Business Manager
 - Financial: Treasurer, Business Manager
 - Policies & By-Laws: Steve Marriot, Marilyn Kinsella, Business Manager
 - Conference: President Elect Greg Weiss, Vice President Gwyn Calvetti, Jenifer Strauss, Hardy Garrison, Katie Knutson, Dick Strader, Business Manager
 - Nominations: Past President, President Elect
 - Fringe Committee: Tina Rohde, Katie Knutson
- Conference Center Tour:

Meeting was preceded by dinner in dining hall and orientation tour of the Gruenhagen Conference Center by conference center employee, Carol Kozlowski. Michigan representative and Secretary visited the Park Plaza Hotel. Both sites were being considered for possible 2008 conference site.
- Definition of Storytelling:
 - Current Member Response: The 12 member responses in-house were reviewed. While there were some areas of disagreement with standing definition, all applauded the effort to start the process. Concern was expressed that the vocabulary was too complex to use definition with children.
 - Response Form: Webmaster will modify the response field in form to allow adding alternative definition.

- Conference Poster: Secretary will create a poster for conference lobby where members can add comments and definitions via sticky notes.
- Brochure: Re-design of Northlands brochure to include definition of storytelling was discussed. It can be in downloadable PDF on northlands.net. Informational content makes it suitable for inclusion in other organizations' conference packets. Northlands might print it in bulk and supply it to members either as a member benefit, for cost, or for profit.
- Bookmark: Brochure might be condensed and printed as bookmark for handing out.
- Cost of producing these materials will be investigated to determine which are available as member benefit; and whether costs will be passed along for bulk orders.

Motion 1: Northlands brochure will be re-designed to be informational, including information on storytelling, Northlands and include empty space for individual teller information.

Approved.

Action: President will write text. Business Manager will design and create graphics and layout.

Motion 2: Northlands new informational brochure will also be designed in a variety of forms, e.g. bookmarks, postcards.

Approved.

Action: President will write and condense text. Business Manager will design and create graphics and layout.

• Secretary's Report:

- Minutes were presented. Including the titles and names in the list of attendees was discussed. The body of minutes will only refer to people by titles.
- Searchable Minutes: To make it easier for Board to maintain institutional memory, Secretary volunteered to create and maintain a running list of motions from past and future electronic files.
- Electronic Files: of Minutes, By-Laws, and Motions List will be passed from each Secretary to the next Secretary. Electronic files held by both Secretary and Business Manager for ready access at Board meetings of reasoning and history behind past decisions.

Motion 3: Minutes of 11/06 will be accepted and posted on web.

Approved.

Action: Secretary will email 11/06 Minutes as approved to Business Manager and Webmaster for posting on website.

• Treasurer's Report:

- Current holdings are \$3,400 checking, \$370 endowment fund, and \$5,000 in CDs.
- Question is again raised whether Northlands must file a tax report. Issue has risen every few years but not resolved satisfactorily. Treasurer will consult with Wisconsin-based lawyer who is also a Northlands member.
- 25th Annual Endowment Drive. A fundraising drive specifically to fund the endowment was discussed. Drive will focus on members giving one dollar for each year Northlands has existed to fund the next 25 years. Variants discussed included:

- registration brochure to include option to round up registration fee with difference going to endowment;
- silver stickers on ID badges for donors
- ask for donations during a specific event, e.g. banquet, and send the hat around
- options to make the donation to honor another Northlands member (mentors, founders, departed, etc.)
- public display in lobby, concerts, banquet of a thermometer poster as United Fund does

Motion 4: Northlands will implement an Endowment Drive in recognition of 25th annual conference.

Approved.

Action: Treasurer will lead the implementation, publicity and details of the endowment drive.

- Conference Site Report:

- Increasing costs of current location at Edgewater were again reviewed.
- Numerous proposals were solicited and reviewed for alternative sites.
 - Hotels: All hotels offered costs comparable to current hotel. So moving sites to another hotel gains nothing.
 - Universities: Gruenhagen at University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh was chosen as best offering of facilities, transportation and costs which is why Board meeting is taking place in Gruenhagen.
 - ❖ Gruenhagen, UW concerns and benefits were discussed in light of the Board's tour and analysis of the site.
 - ❖ Benefits: are lowered costs, access to university students and media, and computer lab.
 - ❖ Concerns: limited food and housing options, limits of surrounding community.
 - Religious conference centers: are often rural, and religious presence may be uncomfortable for some attendees. These centers often put restrictions on behavior on the grounds (no smoking, alcohol, etc.)
 - ❖ Green Lake Conference Center is best of these.
 - ❖ Location: about halfway between Madison and Oshkosh.
 - ❖ Beautiful grounds and facilities.
 - ❖ Board briefly discusses moving this Board meeting to Green Lake on Saturday
- Discussion tabled pending further experience of Gruenhagen UW facilities (dorms, bathrooms, catering)

- Nominating Committee Report:

President urged Board to think of members who might be productive future Board members. These members will be approached and asked to volunteer for smaller tasks to explore possible interest.

- Committee Meetings:

Breakfast meetings at 9:00 am Saturday are scheduled for both Conference and Long-Range Planning Committees.

Motion 5: Board meeting will adjourn tonight to reconvene Saturday morning.

Approved.

Action: Board meeting adjourns. Committee meetings will be held at 9:00 am over breakfast with full Board reconvening at 10:30 am Saturday.

- Adjourned at 10:20 p.m., January 12. –
- Committee meetings at 9:00 a.m., January 13 –
- Reconvened at 10:30 a.m. after committee meetings at 9:00 a.m., January 13 -

- Conference Site Report (continued): Discussion resumed.
 - Facilities of Gruenhagen, UW, Oshkosh were discussed and concluded to be unacceptable after using the dorms, bathrooms, cafeterias.
 - Relocating this Board meeting was discussed and agreed upon. Board will continue work at Gruenhagen UW until mid-afternoon move to Green Lake Conference Center which provides a retreat-like setting.
- Board Meeting Dates:
Board discussed ramifications of establishing regular schedule of Board meeting dates. Predetermined dates streamlines the flow of Board duties and allows Directors to protect dates for meetings. By including this action as Policy, rather than in By-Laws, it allows flexibility to adapt dates as necessary.

MOTION 6: Board meeting schedule will follow the policy below whenever possible:

- *Winter* meeting will be held 2nd full weekend in January.
- *Spring* meeting will be held concurrent with *conference* in April.
- *Summer* meeting will be held 3rd full weekend in August.
- Fall meeting will be held 2nd full weekend in November.

Approved.

Action: Policy Chairperson will incorporate this motion into the Policy Manual and transmit copy of Policy Manual to all Board members and Business Manager.

- Conference Publicity:
 - New brochure:
 - Business Manager presented the new design for conference brochures.
 - Design is attractive and less expensive.
 - Changes to brochure:
 - ❖ The words “25th Annual” will be added to the brochure.
 - ❖ Information on the “Silver Endowment Fund” will be added to the brochures.
 - ❖ Further suggestions for brochure will be sent to Business Manager by January 22, 2007.
 - State representatives will send email in March to all known storytellers in their states, regardless of member status, with blurb and link <http://conference.northlands.net>
 - Board discussed low results from past mailings to area libraries, schools and churches. Conclusion was reached that this year mailings will be concentrated on increasing attendance of identified storytellers.

- State Representatives will forward street mailing address for each guild in state to Business Manager.
- Webmaster will send spreadsheet of NSN members in Northlands states to Business Manager.
- Business Manager will mail hard copies of brochures to each of these guilds and NSN members.

- Adjourned for lunch at 12:35 p.m. -
- Reconvened at 1:50 p.m. –

- Concert Report:
Everything is on schedule for the 4 concerts as reported by Concert Chair (Vice President.) MCs are identified for all concerts. Listener/reviewers are identified for submissions. State Representatives will forward name and contact information for their state teller for 5x5 Concert to Concert Chair.
- Conference Report
Conference Chair (President Elect) reviews details for conference and conference planning. Everything is flowing smoothly. Items discussed were:
 - *Raffle & Silent Auction*
 - *Donations:*
 - General donations request is again included in registration form by Business Manager.
 - Silver Endowment requests will be written by Treasurer and emailed to membership by Business Manager.
 - Buck-4-Book donation request will be written by Treasurer and emailed to membership by Business Manager.
 - Quilt – Tina & Colleen, 25th annual memorial. Members decorate squares & its' sewn together.
 - *Closing Ceremony* will be hosted and designed by Iowa state representative.
 - *Badges* for Board will be created so members can identify Directors as people to ask for assistance.
 - *Marketing* in Madison:
 - Street flyers and bulletin boards will be handled by Wisconsin state representative and Madison Minions.
 - Possibility is being explored of convincing current Madison mayor or State Superintendent of Instruction to give welcoming speech at start of conference.
 - University connections are being explored for cooperative advertising since UW has its own storytelling event.
 - Media ads will be purchased and positioned similarly to 2006 campaign because these ads were successful.
 - *Sound:*
 - Recording of concerts may be repeated. It was very favorably received by last year's participants. Options are being investigated to use "Garage Band" software in lieu of recorded directly onto CD. Balancing sound quality between different microphones was discussed and continued to be explored by Conference Chair.

- Sound equipment and set-up will be decided and arranged by Conference Chair and by Concert Chair.
- *Q&A with Board Meeting*: Vice President, Iowa and Minnesota state representatives will represent the Board. Focus will be on listening to comments, and giving the simplest explanation, e.g. “Interesting idea. The current review process is such & so.”
- *Banquet emcee* will be outgoing President.
 - *Speech* on “State of Northlands” will be given by outgoing President.
 - *Decorations* will be created by Past President and an identified member. Directors will be asked to help set up decorations.
 - *Menu* was discussed in regard to dietary and other allergies. Registration form reminds member to notify Northlands of any allergies during registration. Hotel is willing & already prepared to adjust for latex and food allergies.
- *Webpage* will be updated within a few weeks by Webmaster.
- *Signage* will be created and handled by an identified member.
- *Resource Room*: Treasurer and an Appointed Director will oversee Resource Room.
 - Staff will be led by the young adult with past conference experience. She will be assisted by an adult volunteer.
 - Offerings will include:
 - ❖ member products
 - ❖ Northlands’ products
 - ❖ Bucks-4-Books
 - ❖ Silent Auction
 - ❖ Raffle.
 - ❖ *Special Resource Book*, a history of Northlands written by an identified member, will be available for purchase.
 - ❖ *T-shirt* honoring Silver 25th Annual event is being investigated.
- Workshop Selection 2008
 - Process continues to work smoothly and to provide variety and quality in conference workshops and alternates.
 - Summer of 2008, members will be invited to volunteer to review proposals in summer of 2008.
 - Reviewers will include individuals qualified in applied storytelling (e.g. healing arts, education, organizations, producing, etc.) If none volunteer, Board will actively solicit qualified members.
- Survey of Members

Directors discussed creating an online survey of membership to gather information to help Board pinpoint ways to better serve member needs and to discover crossover niches for marketing. Sample questions discussed included

 - What is your job?
 - What are your other interests/hobbies/etc.?

Survey discussion was tabled until an unspecified future meeting. Directors will continue thinking about goals, purpose and form of possible survey.

- Adjourned at 3:30 pm, Saturday, January 13 in Oshkosh, WI –

- Relocated to Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake, WI.
- Tour of facilities and dinner discussion in GLCC cafeteria, Green Lake, WI –
 - Reconvened at 7:00 pm, January 13 at Green Lake, WI -

- Story Slam

Board discussed an unsolicited proposal from an individual member. For a fee, member proposes to assume promotion and production of all concerts and add a story slam. Consensus was that Northlands has neither the funds nor historical precedent to pay a concert producer. At summer conference planning meeting, Board will revisit the idea of a story slam produced by a volunteer as a way to attract youth to future events.

- New Voices Scholarships

- Finances:

- New Voices scholarships are funded by the Raffle and Bucks-4-Books programs.
- Business Manager will establish budget line items for income and outgoing New Voices funds.
- A maximum of four NV scholarships are available for 2007 conference.

- New Voices Participation:

Historically the program has a work exchange portion. Since the conference now runs smoothly, untrained workers are no longer effective. Options were explored for ways New Voices recipients can contribute to Northlands. These included:

- usher the concerts, cleanup programs afterwards.
- create apprentice/mentor program:
 - ❖ scholarship recipients become apprentices. Identify a pool of volunteer mentors from membership. At beginning of conference, introduce apprentices and mentors to each other. Mentor leads conversations with open-ended questions, e.g. “what do you want to do with storytelling.” Mentors will then offer guidance to help apprentice identify which workshops to attend.
 - ❖ apprentices then become members of the New Voices Committee for the following year. Their task is to attend the current conference. They will continue to meet as a committee (physically, phone, electronically) during the following year. Their task is to come up with a project to enhance the NV program at the following year’s conference
 - ❖ incorporate scholarship recipients in Closing Ceremony in a meaningful way.
- Minnesota state representative will spearhead improvements in the New Voice program and ask for assistance as necessary.

- Long Range Planning

Chair of Long Range Planning (Secretary) reviewed ideas generated by members responding to President’s call in December and ideas generated by LRP committee. After a brief discussion, the following process was agreed upon:

- Chair LRP will email an edited list of ideas to Board.
- Each Director will prioritize the idea list and return to LRP Chair.
- Chair will synthesize response and submit prioritized list at Fall or Winter Board meeting.

- Board will review and discuss possible development of top idea(s) at Fall or Winter meeting.
- Minnesota Fringe
Production of Northlands Adult Storytelling Showcase at Minnesota Fringe 2007 was discussed. Spoken word is increasingly popular with MN Fringe audiences. Showcase would effectively serve to promote Northlands to potential new attendees. Dates are August 2-12, 2007. Treasurer agreed to be primary contact on application and will share duties with Minnesota state representative, an experienced Fringe performer. Fee is \$400 to be paid out of Northlands funds. Revenue earned from 65% of the door will return to Northlands after expenses. Advertising by postcards is the only currently identified expense. Lodging, travel and meals will be carried by individual participants.

MOTION 7: Fringe project will be solely managed by the appointed committee.

Approved.

Action: Treasurer and Minnesota state representative are appointed to Fringe Committee.

MOTION 8: Northlands representatives will submit for the Minnesota Fringe Lottery and sponsor the fee and postcard costs if chosen.

Approved:

Action: Fringe Committee will apply and if selected will return any earned income along with a report to Board upon completion.

- Nominating Committee
 - Retiring:
Past President and one appointed Director will retire in April 2007.
 - Officers:
Vice President for 2007-2008 was identified and approved by Board. Other officers either move up into next designated position, or continue to serve out their terms.
 - State Representatives:
Open positions for state representatives include Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa. Board reviewed the By-Laws regarding election and discovered ambiguity in the timeline and process specified.
 - Appointed Directors:
By-laws stipulate that appointed director terms are one year in duration. Nominating Committee plans to use appointments to address specific tasks and to bring fresh perspectives onto the Board. To achieve this, Committee will discuss options with current appointees and non-board members over the next weeks. Committee will report appointment to Board in April.

- Adjourned at 10:00 p.m., January 13-

- Reconvened at 9:30 a.m. after Conference Committee meeting, January 14 -

- Site Tour:

Board toured meeting rooms, two housing options, and nearby grounds. After experiencing housing, catering, meeting rooms, concert area, and grounds, the Board was very favorably impressed with Green Lake Conference Center.

Pros and cons of relocating annual conference to Green Lake were discussed at length. Some topics included: ease of movement for mobility impaired people; alcohol policy; dietary restrictions; banquet options; retreat versus urban setting; camping; boundaries of internet access; Christian atmosphere; park-like setting; variety of lodging available; beauty; affordability.

Multiple conference site proposals were again reviewed including all conference sites suggested by membership. Business manager compared financial reports and facilities and winnowed list to most viable. During this weekend, 3 sites were visited by the Board. Entire Board stayed one night at each of 2 sites and ate at both sites; some Board members ate at a 3rd site.

Green Lake Conference Center was outstanding in the options, service and facilities Northlands' members can enjoy. Some specific questions of logistics and facilities were raised by the Board. Business Manager will contact Green Lake administration and email the answers to the Board within 2-4 days. Absent Board members will be phoned, updated on the Board's impression of Green Lake, and will share their opinions. Action will be taken as necessary for choosing a site for 2008 conference.

MOTION 9: Board meeting will adjourn.

Approved:

Action: Meeting adjourned. Next Board meeting will be April 26, 2007 at 4:00 pm in Madison, WI.

- Meeting adjourned at 11:25 p.m., January 14, 2007 –

- Electronic Board Decisions

MOTION 10: Northlands will hold 2008 Conference at Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake, WI .

Approved (email 1/24/07)

Action: Business Manager will make necessary arrangements to hold 2008 conference at Green Lake Conference Center, WI.

MOTION 11: Northlands by-laws Article 4.02.A - Chapter Representatives - shall be amended thusly:

“Each of the Chapters described in Article II, with the exception of the Other States Chapter, shall elect a Director to the Board for open positions by putting out a call for nominations 70 days before the conference. Current chapter (state) representative or designee will nominate at least 1 person. Nominations will be closed 40 days before the conference. At that time vote will be called among that chapter's members. Vote will be closed 10 days after it is called. Business

Manager will receive and tabulate votes. Business Manager will deliver results to current state representative or designee who will present results to chapter at conference state meeting.”

Approved (email 1/28/07)

Action: Secretary will email Board file with amended By-Laws.

- Election Results Letter

The following letter was sent to defeated candidates for state representative positions in two states.

From: Northlands Storytelling <info@northlands.net>

Date: Tue, 03 Apr 2007 06:51:12 -0500

Subject: State rep position

Dear MemberName,

Thank you for your interest in running for a seat on the Northlands Storytelling Network Board of Directors. Northlands depends on the active participation of our members to remain a vital and progressive organization in the storytelling community.

The incumbent board member received the most votes in your state and retains his seat on the board.

Even though you did not win a seat on the board this time, keep in mind that elections happen every two years and I would encourage you to run again. There are also many other ways you can contribute to Northlands, including helping with a particular committee project, submitting articles to or editing the Northlands Journal or helping out with our annual conference.

It is not a coincidence that members who are active in the organization at the conference or on committees are often later elected (or appointed) to the Northlands Board.

I look forward to seeing you in Madison in April!

Sincerely,

Kevin Strauss, your President

Northlands Storytelling Network

Kevin@naturestory.com