

Northlands Storytelling Network  
Board of Directors Meeting  
August 17-19, 2007  
Minutes

**Friday 8/17/07 – Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake, WI**

Called to Order 6:44 pm by President Greg Weiss

- Board of Directors present were:

Officers:

President – Greg Weiss

President Elect – Gwyn Calvetti

Treasurer - Tina Rohde

Secretary – Yvonne Healy

Past President – Kevin Strauss

State Representatives:

Illinois – Marilyn Kinsella

Iowa – Bev Heintz

Michigan - Dick Strader

Minnesota – Katie Knutson

Appointed Directors:

Judy Sima

Steve Marriott

Business Manager:

Karen Wollscheid

- Committee rosters are:
  - Committee members whose role stipulates participation are identified by role (ex officio). Other committee members are volunteers and are identified by name.
  - President is member of all committees.
  - Executive Committee: President (chair), Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Past President, President Elect
  - Conference: President Elect (chair), Vice President, Business Manager, Tina Rodhe, Yvonne Healy, Kevin Strauss, Katie Knutson, Dick Strader, Judy Sima
  - Long Range Planning: Kevin Strauss (chair), Tina Rodhe, Bev Heintz, Judy Sima, Steve Marriott
  - Staff Support: Treasurer (chair), Gwyn Calvetti
  - Web: Hardy Garrison (webmaster), Business Manager
  - Membership: all State Representatives plus Business Manager
  - Financial: Treasurer, Business Manager
  - Policies & By-Laws: Steve Marriott (chair), Marilyn Kinsella, Karen Wollscheid
  - Nominations: Past President (chair), President Elect
  - New Voices: Judy Sima (chair), Katie Knutson
  - Minneapolis Fringe: Tina Rohde, Katie Knutson
- Missing Members  
Meeting began with silence to send good thoughts to absent member for their swift return to good health and to us.
- Procedure for proposing board projects.  
Discussion focused on clarifying the process of proposing board projects.

- Board must discuss and approve any new project before any announcement is made to membership or to public.
- Any director may suggest a new project by either:
  - β making an informal proposal to the Board via email or other communication; or
  - β asking President to add topic to agenda.
- Chair of By-Laws Committee will add this procedure to the Policy and Procedure Manual.
  
- Special seminar/Storylab  
Board discussed a hypothetical project to create a pilot “storylab” in cooperation with the Healing Story Alliance (H.S.A.), a special interest group (SIG) within National Storytelling Network (NSN.)  
  
Discussion focused on managing Northlands’ relationship with National Storytelling Network which is H.S.A.’s parent organization. Northlands’ Business Manager will investigate this possibility and report back to the Board.
  
- Promotional Material
  - Print materials need to be revamped. Business Manager displayed mockup of informational brochure for Board to review throughout weekend. She will incorporate suggestions. Goal to have it ready for November meeting to present. Note: informational brochure is a separate document from the membership brochure. Membership brochure needs an update visually. Board discussed using new logo on materials. By November, board should bring cool ideas for postcards, bookmarks and other easy handouts to be created for members’ use.
  
  - Website needs to be overhauled. Website Committee suggests that this project is best handled in later months in cooperation with a subcommittee of Membership Committee. Board will revisit this issue in November.
  
- Minneapolis Fringe
  - Audiences: Northlands Fringe audiences ranged from 20-60. Shows received good reviews in Fringe blog with an average of 5/5 stars. Northlands’ name appeared in many different venues throughout the Fringe since other members produced additional shows. One Northlands Fringe performer got an article in her Iowa newspaper. Minnesota members feel that Northlands was instrumental in substantially increasing awareness of storytelling among Fringe audiences.
  
  - Finances: Northlands spent \$400 for entry fee and \$257 for publicity. Some income was earned through attendance. Final figures will be presented at November meeting.
  
  - 2008: Board is encouraged to repeat the offering in 2008 with different chairs. One suggestion was to include an article about Fringe in journal, newsletter, or website with an email call for volunteers to produce with at least 1 member of committee being from

Twin Cities area. Another suggestion was to consider offering an honorarium to producer since it occurs during prime work season and producer(s) must forego other income generating work.

- National Storytelling Network
  - Regional Leaders National Forum: President and Vice President reported on the meeting in St. Louis hosted by National Storytelling Network to investigate how each organization can improve communication and mutual support to nurture storytelling nationwide and regionally. Northlands representatives thought that this was a good thing. In fact, they suggest that Northlands follow the lead and also create a regional/national leaders forum within Northlands' conference.
  - National Storytelling Magazine: NSN invited Northlands President to act as guest editor for an upcoming issue. President accepted the offer. The topic of the NSN issue will be on storytelling outreach.
  - Northlands-NSN Liaison: reported that both organizations share common concerns to improve fundraising and communication with members.
- Physical Health Challenges to Board Members: Wisconsin Representative and Vice President

Due to his current health situation, the Wisconsin representative is stepping down. He will continue to act as Webmaster, but needs to leave the board to focus on his health. He suggested Janet Jones be appointed to fill out remainder of the term ending April 2009.

**Motion 1:** Board appoints Janet Jones to act as interim Wisconsin representative if she is willing.

**Approved.**

**Action:** Business Manager will contact Ms. Jones. Pending Ms. Jones' acceptance, her email address will be added to board address by Business Manager or Webmaster; and Secretary will forward copies of current official Board documents.

President used the presidential discretionary fund to purchase cool gifts for health challenged Vice President and Wisconsin representative.

- Local Outreach Concerts

Board discussed desirability of producing a single concert at one or more upcoming Board meetings to build local audience and interest in April conference. A number of local venues were identified and will be investigated by Appointed Director from Iowa. Schedule of upcoming meetings were reviewed for possible concert times. Saturday night seemed the best time at November and January meetings.

**Action:** Business Manager will work with Sue Krueger to investigate Green Lake Center venues.

**Action:** Appointed Director from Iowa will investigate town-based venues and arrange tellers and production, if feasible.

- Secretary's Report

Minutes had been emailed to each Board member to read prior to this meeting and send any changes. Secretary reported minor changes in tense and syntax were made as suggested, but no substantive changes to email.

**Motion 2:** Board approves April 2007 minutes as presented.

**Approved.**

**Action:** Web Committee will upload Minutes to website.

- Board Appointments, Elected Positions, and Voting Procedures

Nominating Committee (President and Past President) reviewed procedures for appointing and electing Board members so everyone knows how business is conducted.

- Voting: By-Laws stipulate that Northlands' proceed in 'an orderly manner.' Board accepts Roberts Rules of Order as a guideline but not rule. Northlands' process is less formal to maximize flexibility and responsiveness.
  - Motion is made by a Board Director.
  - Second is made by another Board Director.
  - Discussion is called and ended by President.
  - Anyone may call to table a motion.
  - Only Director who made Motion can rescind it.
  - President calls the vote when discussion is complete.
  - President votes only to break tie.
- Development of Board Member
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Year: watch and see. Participate to comfort level.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Year: begin to assume leadership through committee participation.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup>+ Years: be very active in direction and administration of Northlands.
- Elected Board Members
  - Also known as "state representatives", "chapter representatives"
  - State meetings are held to elect one representative as Director on Board. A state representative, also known as 'chapter representative' in by-laws, can move into other roles at any time.
- Appointed Board Members
  - Also referred to as "appointed directors", "associate directors".
  - Term of appointment is one year ending in April regardless of when appointment began.
  - Members can be appointed at any time.
  - Directors can be re-appointed.
  - Re-appointment or lack thereof is not a performance review.

- Appointees are chosen from candidates whom Nominating Committee thinks might move into or return to full board membership, especially the presidential track.
- Appointments are made to accomplish a specific task.
- Presidential Track:  
Anyone who's served on board 1 year can move into the 4-year presidential track.  
Positions are:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Year: Vice President,
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Year: President Elect (a.k.a. Conference Chair),
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Year: President,
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Year: Past President.
- Executive Committee:  
Also known as "officers." The 5 officers of Northlands serve on the Board and are:
  - Vice President,
  - President Elect,
  - President,
  - Past President,
  - Treasurer (one year term),
  - Secretary (one year term).

- Adjourned at 11:24 pm, August 17 –

- Board Meeting reconvened at 9:12 am, August 18 –

- Current Meeting Structure

Current President reviewed the way he structures Board meetings and agenda. Each item is listed specifically in agenda. He tends to more items on paper than are needed to ensure that nothing is forgotten. Some agenda items may be dealt with very swiftly.

Last agenda item of Board Meeting is member communications.

All Board members, especially state representatives, should forward any communication from a member to current President so he can include it in agenda; and Board can hear it, and discuss it, if necessary.

He distinguishes between discussion items and action items. He designs agenda to cover discussion items first. Action items are the second part of meeting.

- Committees

Table of current committees is passed around. Board members are encouraged to review their current commitments and plug holes in any committees. Committees will be filled by end of Board meeting.

- Recognition of Retiring Board Members.

Board discussed timing and procedure to recognize retiring Board members since some have given many years of volunteer service. It will be during Saturday night dinner. It will be

handled by the outgoing President. Recognition will include an award or plaque and a certificate.

- Conference 2007

Entire Board participated in a general discussion which follows. Conference Committee will meet later to attend to specific details.

Business Manager created and shared a conference manual with comments, suggestions, survey monkey, evaluations, emails, and sticky note posterboards from 2007 conference attendees. Below are a few of the member ideas discussed.

- 1-2 comments that Fringe competed with swaps. Alternative: daytime swaps and keep one nighttime swap.
- Board members reported that night swap was well-attended but not so full that it could not serve all who wanted to tell. Swap etiquette needs to be reviewed and modeled by swap host.
- Fringe was too late for some to stay awake. Others felt that Fringe gave options to nightowls.

Financial report and balance sheet reflects current balance of \$18,000.

Secretary supplied notes of Pluses and Tweaks for 2007 from post-mortem Board meeting in April. Bullet format was appreciated because it made it easy to see essentials.

Additional Discussion:

- Conference showed a distinct profit; currently \$18,000 in bank.
- Idea floated to create a hardbound book (e.g. Cherish Bound) of archives & Pat Coffie's history of Northlands collection.
- Graduate Credits works. Keep current personnel.
- New Voices application process needs tweaking. Investigate connection to local college (Ripon).
- Fringe vs. swaps: process of adjustment. Need more data. Generally very well received. Members and Board agree that it's better to have lots of options though people cannot attend everything.
- Fringe Disclaimer & Waiver of Liability & Assumption of Responsibility for Fringe performances & performers will be investigated & discussed by Conference Committee.
- Business Manager will ask Green Lake if they have an accident liability insurance for people who come.
- Possibility of Posting Signs with Content Warnings outside the Fringe Doors.
- Fringe is closed to public.
- Investigate story slam collaboration with Wisconsin Public Radio, similar to Minnesota Public Radio.
- Concert evaluations:

- Much discussion followed about whether, and how, Northlands might bring storytelling to next level by offering evaluations of concert submission.
- Emcees also evaluated.
- Concert flow also evaluated.
- Long Range Planning will investigate how to proceed with this issue, need clarity on what is being evaluated, purpose of the evaluation, etc.
- Macro Schedule of Conference:
- Board agreed to keep same basic schedule in new venue with slight adjustments to fit the Green Lake meal schedule and room logistics.
- Friday remains predominantly 3 & 6 hour intensives, plus concert, fringes and one nighttime swap.
- Saturday remains predominantly, but not exclusively, 90 minute workshops plus concert, fringes, and one nighttime swap.
- Exception on Saturday is allowed for possibly including exceptional 3 hour workshop
- Sunday remains 1 session of 90 minutes, plus one concert.
- New room logistics are:
  - Minimum spaces = 4 rooms,
  - maximum spaces = 7 rooms.
- Coaching @ Conference
- Board decided that coaching sessions would be evaluated through the proposal process. If a coaching session was proposed and ranked highly, it will be offered. Otherwise, no separate coaching will be officially sponsored.
- Resource Room vs. Green Lake Store: Conference committee will visit at lunchtime and make recommendations.

- Adjourned at 12:15 pm, August 18 –

- Board Meeting reconvened at 1:35 pm, August 18 –

- Conference 2008: Workshop Selection

Each proposals for presentations had been read and evaluated by 5 Board members. Evaluations were numerically rated. Business Manager presented Board with a spreadsheet sorted from highest to lowest. Board started at the top and worked down to fill slots. Discussion centered around references and any pertinent technical logistics.

**Motion 3:** Board will approve the workshop slate as created from today's review of evaluations.

**Approved**

**Action:** Business Manager will notify presenters of acceptance or rejection of submitted presentation for April 2008 conference.

- Adjourned at 5:50 pm, August 18 –  
- Committees met at 7:00 pm –  
- Board Meeting reconvened at 9:24 pm, August 18 -

- Grants

Grant applications received by deadline were reviewed and discussed.

**Motion 4:** Board approves \$800 grant for necessary transportation for El Salvador storytelling project.

**Approved.**

**Action:** Business Manager will send letters of acceptance or rejection to grant applicants.

- Conference Committee

report will be presented to Board at November meeting.

- Long Range Planning Committee

Developed a new set of 5 planning goals, e.g, indepth training to members to develop their skills; build a rainy day fund of 2 years expenses; develop evaluations of concert performance evaluations. Report will be emailed to Board to allow time for consideration before discussion and decision at later Board meetings.

- Treasurer's Report

- Current balance is \$18,000.
- Rainy Day Fund was discussed. This topic has arisen for years as sound financial practice. Now may be the time to focus on specifically creating such a fund and specifying the amount. Discussion will continue at future Board meetings.
- Conference Fees: registration fee will not fluctuate. However, lodging and meal costs result in a large reduction to member expense. This fact must be well-publicized to members.

- Adjourned at 10:53 pm, August 18 –

- Next Board Meeting will be held November 9-11, 2007 at Green Lake Conference Center, WI

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Electronic Board Business  
conducted via email.

**Motion 5:** Board will appoint Marilyn Kinsella as Vice President, effective immediately.

**Approved** electronically: September 15, 2007

**Action:** Illinois representative, Marilyn Kinsella, now undertakes Vice Presidential duties. Board will recruit an interim Illinois representative to fill her place.

**Motion 6:** Board will appoint Hardy Garrison as an associate board member in charge of our Northlands website.

**Approved** electronically: September 18, 2007

**Action:** Wisconsin representative, Hardy Garrison, becomes an appointed board member. Board will recruit an interim Wisconsin representative to fill that slot.

**Motion 7:** Board will appoint Ben Rosenfeld as interim Illinois representative on Board of Directors.

**Approved** electronically: September 28, 2007

**Action:** Secretary will email currently official Board documents to Ben Rosenfield.