

**Northlands Storytelling Network  
Board of Directors Meeting  
August 15-17, 2008  
Woodstock, Illinois**

**Friday, August 15 – 12-5p  
Long Range Goals Committee meeting**

**Friday, August 15 – 7pm  
Board of Directors Meeting**

Board Members present: Ben Rosenfeld, Greg Weiss, Kevin Strauss, Gwen Cavetti, Marcia Gutierrez , Jean Bolley, Bev Heintz, Marilyn Kinsella, and business manager Karen Wollscheid

Absent: Judy Sima, Katie Knutson, Darlene Neumann, Janet Jones

**5-minute check-in**

Since it was the one-year anniversary of the passing of a Northland's Board Member, Gwen opened the meeting with members' reflections on Leanne Johnson.

Karen gave a short story on the derivation of her duck status. Since she is our duck queen, she bestowed on the board yellow "team ducks" that work diligently to make Northland's smooth sailing through great team effort.

**Acceptance of April meeting minutes**

**Motion:**

Greg moves to accept and Marcia seconded to accept the minutes. Discussion: Clarification on Bridget and Andrea helping. Perfume sensitivity – Perhaps, scent-free on programs? Perfume cologne hair sprays are the worst. Contacting hotel on issues? Yes. Minutes accepted.

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer report: Karen – handed out 2007-2008 fiscal year report. Discussion. Good standing, good savings. Greg – "diligence of Karen in everything made us under the budget"

**Motion:**

Kevin and Bev motion to accept the report....discussion. Vote – accepted

**Agenda**

Agenda discussion on additions. None

## Nominating Committee

Committee ...Greg, Gwen, and Marilyn

### **Motion:**

Greg – motion to accept Hardy’s resignation with regrets, Kevin seconded. Discussion. Vote accepted.

## Long Range Planning

Kevin Strauss, Chair

Surveys – to find out what our members need and want. What works for storytelling. Giving them useful info. Two surveys: 1. Who is working and 2. What’s working. Spread them out so the members don’t get confused. It gives the board something to work with. Shorter is better. Long questions are aggravating. Discussion – how many questions on a page? What are the capabilities of Survey Monkey? PDFs that can be edited and filled out online?

Goals: Old tag line for Northlands. “Linking and nurturing storytellers” what does it mean? Statement helps to clarify whether ideas reflect that statement. Revise mission statement? Possible new statement...Northland helps you find and craft and tell your best stories. – discuss at future board meeting as possible action statement.

## Other Business

### **Discussions:**

1. Membership Committee – Storylabs model – outside conference. Fox Valley already does this at their festival. Judy Sima’s email regarding NSN supporting regional initiatives. Bring it to the members to see if there is some involvement. Perhaps membership could spearhead using the state reps to have a “story lab” in the state. CPDUs offered to attendees?
2. Membership Committee - member benefits – research on how to find an agent - survey members and find out what they need. Develop non-festival ideas venues for storytelling – bringing it to adults, dinner theatres, cafes, Ask members how they can be involved. This poses an opportunity to be involved. Greg – need to get in the public eye by offering a weekly or monthly venue What is out there and what works? Membership committee would be good to see these thru.
3. Budget Committee - Build “rainy day” savings (enough funds to run the organization for a year). Rainy day – change our reference to it as the “emergency fund” – to cover expenses in case of dire disaster. Contingency plan. Insurance policy inverted in CD with better return.

Goal: to grow the endowment fund to \$10,000 in 5 years. Boards reserve the right to accept or deny a donation.

4. Long Range Planning:
- a. Advocate for storytellers and storytelling (this may be bigger than we are – NSN needs to tackle it) (give our members ideas on how to do this)
  - b. Venues for non-storytellers to make money.
  - c. K-12 for storytelling in curriculum
  - d. How to write a review for storytelling (but – storytelling is a one-time thing...not like theatre. What good is it?)
  - e. Story day or Story week. (Anyone can enter info into Chase’s Calendar of events) Ask our reps to encourage developing (local, city, state)
  - f. Brain trust – should not do it as a board...what is your idea how can you make it happen. Maybe putting it as Advocacy not Long Range. Maybe as a panel discussion at the conference.

Adjourned at 10:00 PM.

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**Reconvene: Saturday, August 16, 2008 at 9:00 AM**

**Survey #1 - “Where are you in Storytelling?”**

Each question was reviewed for its merits and word construction

**Motion:**

Approve it on-line (mail it to the exec committee) Bev and Kevin to make corrections and send to exec and then to Karen, second by Ben

**Survey #2 - “Who’s working and how”**

Each question was reviewed for its merits and word construction

Recommendation: Run surveys a few months apart to avoid confusion

**Motion:**

Bev motioned that Kevin edit the survey, e-mail the Survey Monkey to committee for on-line approval, and give it to Karen to send to members. Seconded by Greg.

**Discussion of NSN bulletin regarding regional initiatives**

\$1,000.00 grant from NSN is really a loan – board agreed this is not applicable for Northlands

Life of NSN – discussion on pros and cons: w/o NSN there would be no national voice to be accepted as an art form. Smaller organizations can be affiliated and credibility. It has to survive. Needs support. Letter of support from Northlands? Very vocal people are separating our vision. Reasons why – national and global connections; we are affiliate member of NSN so it is a good reason to send a letter. Opportunities. We need them and they need us.

**Action Item:** Gwyn- we as a board communicate to our members the value of the national presence of NSN. Karen volunteered to write a letter of support from Northlands and signed by board.

## Call for Proposals

Discount for presenters – discussion...incentives. Offer 50% discount on conference registration (easy to calculate, affordable, enticing for more tellers) (cost? \$2,000.00)

### **Motion:**

Ben Each workshop/intensive accepted for the conference will receive one 50% registration discount plus one honorarium Greg second. Vote passed.

**Action Item** – Marilyn to secure names for Workshop reviewers – to include board members and ask state liaisons to find one from each state to read a portion of the submissions.

**Action Item** – Karen to get workshop proposal info out to the members in August

Recommendation: Change the workshop genres to include “Lecture.”

## Budget

Karen provided the spreadsheets for past and upcoming expenses

Line by line discussion of each budget expense.

Advertising and Board member registration

Discussion – Karen suggested a percentage off the conference registration for board members, as a benefit of board service. Or increase the line item for board meeting expenses.

### **Motion**

Ben – Board Members get a 50% discount on conference registration. Marcia seconded. Vote agreed.

Discussion: We will be financially secure with the approved discounts, even if we have a low attendance year.

### **Motion**

Ben: Accept the budget as amended. Second – Bev. Vote: Agreed

Discussion: Invest some of our savings in a CD - \$10,000.00 at 3.5%

### **Motion:**

Kevin: Have the treasurer take \$10,000.00 from savings and put into a CD Bev seconded. Vote Agreed

## **Procedures Manual and Job Descriptions**

**Action Item:** Karen will work with Ben and Kevin to flesh out procedures and job descriptions for working manual.

## **Other Discussions**

Discussion to change the Karen's title of the *business manager* position to *executive director* to reflect the range of duties that position holds. Seconded. Discussion Vote: agreed.

## **Nominating Board discussion:**

It is imperative to name an assistant to the Conference Chair as soon as possible. Several names were brought forward; Greg will contact them to see if they are interested. Minnesota needs a rep.

Next Meeting:

The November meeting will be in Iowa. Bev Heintz will coordinate the accommodations.

**Gwyn called the meeting to a close.**

Minutes Submitted by Marilyn Kinsella