

American Association of Woodturners

Board Meeting

June 20, 21, and 26, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the AAW Board of Directors was convened at The Kansas City Marriott hotel in Kansas City, Missouri, at 8:33 a.m., on Tuesday, June 20, 2017, with President Greg Schramek presiding.

Board members in attendance were Jeff Brockett, Joe Dickey, Kathleen Duncan, John Ellis, Wayne Furr, David Heim, and Molly Winton. Louis Vadeboncoeur was absent for the meeting on Tuesday, June 20, and joined on Wednesday, June 21. Staff members present were Linda Ferber, Phil McDonald, Kim Rymer, and Editor Josh Friend.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 17, 2017, Board meeting were reviewed. John Ellis moved to accept the minutes, as presented. Wayne Furr seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously accepted, as written.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

May 2017 Financial Reports

Joe Dickey summarized the May 2017 financial reports and noted the following points:

- Unadjusted net income as of May 31 was \$384.9k, which is \$4.2k unfavorable to budget.
- Adjusted net income as of May 31 was \$30.2k, which is \$14.2k favorable to budget.
- The year-end forecast for net income is \$61.2k, which is \$11.2k unfavorable to budget.
- May 31 "Cash on Hand" is \$754k.
- The year-end forecast for "Cash on Hand" is \$727k.

The Board discussion briefly touched on long range planning, expenses, staff time, fundraising, and member perceptions.

Phil McDonald noted that he anticipates a Symposium net gain of between \$30k and \$40k. He also indicated that membership recruitment is within 1% of target and June numbers look good. Phil said exceeding 16,000 members by year end is likely and mentioned that retention for 2016 was 85%.

Phil presented a chart illustrating unrestricted reserves for discussion. He anticipates that unrestricted reserves for 2017 will be positive for the first time since 2009. Unrestricted reserves hit a low in 2012.

CHANGES TO BOARD ELECTION VOTING SCHEDULE

Wayne Furr raised the matter of whether the current Board election process is too long. He indicated that the time frame may be altered by the Board with a revision to the bylaws Section 14.01 Amendments, section 5.18 Board Elections, except if the change impacts key elements of the membership's ability to engage in the board election process (as noted in the bylaws).

The Board discussed various considerations for altering the voting process, which included receiving ballots during the Symposium and avoiding any influences of regional voting concerns.

John Ellis made a motion to change the voting schedule as follows. Wayne Furr seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously accepted.

Resolved, the Board voting period shall not exceed a one month period beginning on August 1. All electronic and paper ballots (if requested) must be received by the office not later than midnight August 31. This will become effective in 2018.

Section 5.18 Board Elections

Current/existing reading: (iv) Ballots will be mailed out with the membership renewal packet in the beginning of August with a return deadline postmarked no later than October 21.

New reading: The voting period will begin August 1. All electronic ballots (and paper ballots, if requested) must be received by the office no later than midnight August 31. This will become effective in 2018.

ADVANCED PREPARATIONS FOR SOFA

Phil McDonald stated that the Sculpture Objects Functional Art + Design (SOFA) Fair in Chicago is the premier gallery-presented art fair dedicated to three-dimensional art and design. SOFA organizers offer a limited number of subsidized special exhibits for nonprofits. The cost is about \$10k for a nonprofit as opposed to \$40-50k for a for-profit business. The SOFA Fair is designed to be a retail event to buy expensive work. While only highlighting a limited number of woodturning artists, Phil reported that the event's extraordinary traffic would be good for AAW's visibility. Tib Shaw is leading AAW's representation at SOFA Chicago 2017 in November, and SOFA organizers have accepted her exhibition proposal, "Material Evidence." The expenses for producing the exhibit and AAW's nonprofit presentation were included in the 2017 operating budget.

2018 PRELIMINARY CALL FOR HONORARY MEMBERS

The Board discussed several proposed Honorary Lifetime Members for consideration in 2018, as well as the need to have letters of recommendation and adoption by a Board member for each.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The regular Board meeting went into Executive Session at 12:20 p.m. on Tuesday, June 20. The regular Board meeting resumed at 1:08 p.m.

POP POLICY ISSUES

Phil McDonald presented background information addressing policy questions about improving transparency of the POP Committee's operations and perceptions about potential conflict of interest or favoritism.

Greg Schramek suggested that the Board review each of the questions raised, make recommendations, bring the recommendations to the POP co-chairs. The Board discussion generated a number of informal recommendations:

POP Panel Discussions

Following policy revisions in 2015 the POP Committee now submits a list of panel discussion recommendations to the Symposium Selection Committee for consideration. The Symposium Selection Committee will make the final decisions.

POP Merit Award

The POP Committee should submit a list of at least three Merit Award recipient nominations to the Board for consideration. The Board will make the final selection. As with the Honorary Lifetime Members, POP Committee members should be off the POP Committee for a minimum of three years before they may be considered for a POP Merit Award.

Symposium Reimbursement

Under current Board policy POP Committee members are eligible for travel and lodging reimbursements to attend symposia. This is paid by releasing POP restricted fund and totals about \$6,000 per year. Alternatives were discussed. It was also mentioned that EOG grants to attend the Symposium were one alternative.

POP Procedures

The Board recommends that the POP Committee develop and document its operating procedures.

SYMPOSIUM COMMITTEE

Jeff Brockett recommended that Board members be visible at the Symposium. He suggested they serve as greeters, answer questions, check banquet tickets on Saturday evening, and be near the Silent Auction table when the auction closes. Jeff noted that it is important to talk with volunteers and express appreciation.

A discussion ensuing about possible changes to the Portland Symposium

Demonstrators

Jeff indicated that two invited demonstrators have since dropped out, leaving space for alternates to be selected.

Trade Show and Exhibitions

He said the Symposium Committee is evaluating whether to monetize the Trade Show and Exhibitions. The Committee will discuss the prospect of charging \$5 with 2017 Trade Show vendors and need to make a decision by the August Board meeting.

January Board Meeting in St. Paul

Jeff recommends the Board consider meeting in St. Paul vs. Portland for the January 2018 Board meeting.

Phil McDonald reported that hotel incentives in Portland and the fact that two Board members would not need to fly would produce relatively small cost savings. The Board discussed the value of face-to-face meetings and that a contingent will be required to travel to Portland for the winter planning site visit.

Demonstrator Compensation

Jeff stated that some Symposium demonstrators said they would not be “made whole” for travel and lodging expenses in Kansas City. He recommended studying possible travel reimbursement increases. He noted that the Portland Symposium will be even more expensive.

Phil McDonald indicated that it’s important to incent demonstrators to stay at the host hotel.

Truck Rental

Jeff stated that AAW may not do an early shipment of face shields, etc. to the Portland Symposium. For Kansas City, the cost was \$700. For Portland, it will be more expensive. The advantage of doing an early shipment is that it takes pressure off of locals for assembly.

Handout Book

Jeff suggested that pages be cut from the Handout Book to reduce costs. For example, if the page count was reduced by 50%, AAW could save between \$5,000 and \$6,000. The actual cost to AAW for the Handout Book is about \$12/attendee.

Youth Program

Jeff indicated that the Board should constantly evaluate the Youth Program to determine whether it continues to meet its stated goals. There are only 21 youth preregistered for the Kansas City Symposium.

Auctions

Phil McDonald provided background information reported that in 2012, the Board decided it would no longer fund new acquisitions to the permanent collection. AAW has on occasion received donated artwork from personal collections. The board discussed future opportunities to realize value if selected work was divested, and whether the annual auctions might be the optimal venue to do so.

POP Auction

Greg Schramek facilitated a discussion about the utility of managing restricted fund accounts, noting the Board's action earlier to approve changing the restriction status for the EOG auction proceeds. Discussion followed whether a similar policy change might be warranted for the POP auction proceeds. No action was taken and it was decided to consult further on the matter with the POP Committee

Portland

Jeff reported that all "invited" demonstrators for the Portland Symposium have been invited, and that the "selected" demonstrators will be determined by August 31.

RECESS

The Board meeting recessed on Tuesday, June 20, 2017, at 5:07 p.m.

CONTINUATION

The Board meeting resumed on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, at 8:30 a.m.

Joining the Board meeting were, Board member, Louis Vadeboncoeur, as well as Co-Chairs of the Professional Outreach Program (POP), Barbara Crockett and David Ellsworth.

POP COMMITTEE REPORT

Barbara Crockett indicated there were personnel changes on the POP Committee and distributed an updated list of POP Committee members and their responsibilities.

David Ellsworth summarized the POP Committee's role and accountabilities. He also updated the Board on the status of the POP Video Library project proposal, noting the main stumbling block is the editing.

The board engaged a discussion about the role of the committee with a dialogue about the future direction of the Collectors of Wood Art (CWA), and involvement in Vision 2020 planning. The potential for engaging the POP more closely in Vision 2020 planning was raised to broaden the Committee's advisory role and to meet the specific learning needs of the professional turners. A number of areas for improving the transparency of POP Committee operations were covered:

Panel Discussions

A list of panel discussion topics and participants should be provided by the POP Committee (and other groups) to the Symposium Selection Committee. Jeff Brockett noted that the Selection Committee and the POP Committee can discuss what works best from a timeline perspective.

Merit Awards

The POP Committee should consider more than one candidate for a Merit Award and the final decision would be made and approved by the Board.

POP Exhibition

Ensuring transparency through all selection processes during the annual POP exhibit.

Financial

The need to reassess the present policy allowing committee member eligibility for full symposium travel and lodging reimbursement.

IG Excellence Awards

There needs to be clarification about specifically who can win.

The conclusion was to continue consultations with the POP Committee.

KANSAS CITY/CONFERENCE DIRECT

Susan Tobin and Patty Kealy from Conference Direct (conference coordinators) joined the meeting.

Logistics review

Phil McDonald acknowledged the significant role Jeff Brockett has played in the Symposium management and in documenting key business processes. He also acknowledged that Linda Ferber has been phenomenal in improving core business processes.

Susan Tobin reported that as of Tuesday afternoon the Trade Show is in place and demonstration rooms are being set up. Fern (decorator) has been very accommodating and the contract labor has been wonderful. Susan noted there are no major problems so far.

WOODTURNING FUNDAMENTALS

Josh Friend explained that the Woodturning FUNdamentals (WF) discussion scheduled for June is a continuation of past deliberations. Josh summarized the proposal including more recent revisions and explained the benefits and relationship to Vision 2020 priorities. Discussion ensued and numerous questions were raised. The plan will feed the archives and fill the gaps in the online curriculum. Editorial costs at about \$138 per page, compare favorably with the Journal and other professional publications.

Joe Dickey reiterated that \$20k is needed in 2018 for WF, which includes \$1,200 for contributors per issue.

In response to questions about growing ad revenues through WF Phil McDonald described current efforts by our ad sales contractors. In the past advertisers have been slow to embrace advertising in online publications.

David Heim made a motion to accept Josh Friend's proposal to engage John Kelsey to produce Woodturning FUNdamentals, as presented. Joe Dickey seconded the motion.

After discussion, the motion was revised as follows:

David Heim made a motion to accept Josh Friend's proposal to produce Woodturning FUNdamentals, as presented.

A Board vote took place resulting in five "nays" and three "ayes." The motion did not pass.

VISION 2020 OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Phil McDonald presented an update from the Oversight Committee including the proposed next set of priorities. He noted the drafted priorities will emphasize new services and resources of direct value to chapters, as follows:

- 1) Continued development of the demonstrator directory tool;
- 2) Enhanced curriculum that promotes successful demonstrations;
- 3) Program to support the cultivation of demonstration skills at chapter and regional levels;
- 4) Support development of chapter mentors and develop new teaching/coaching materials;
- 5) Support experienced turners who want to become professional turners and sell their work.

This will be presented for consideration to the chapter representatives during the annual chapter meeting in KC. The meeting agenda will include a call for chapter volunteers to serve on the initiative planning work teams.

LONG RANGE IT ARCHITECTURE INITIATIVE

Phil McDonald presented the IT consultant's findings and recommendations report and facilitated Board discussion and feedback. The report identifies recommended on the IT Architecture Initiative and asked for thoughts on how it ties back to VISION 2020. He noted that in September, it will be four years since signing contract with Your Management (YM). Phil reminded the Board that AAW is currently relying on a number of standalone systems to deliver member benefits. AAW needs to provide a single sign on capability. Electric Citizen estimates the cost of the platform to be \$250,000 from origin to implementation including operating and maintenance estimates. (there may be efficiencies to be gained). Phil noted that technology investments can be capitalized; however AAW needs to remain diligent in managing unrestricted reserves.

Various financing and fundraising ideas were discussed.

ANNUAL CHAPTER OFFICER MEETING

Phil McDonald stated that emphasis during the year's session will be on Vision 2002 initiatives accomplished and planned. Other agenda items will be recent policy actions, and the progress on the 50% dues initiative.

LONG RANGE BUDGET PLANNING – FOLLOW UP

The Board revisited the long range budget planning discussion to determine follow-up measures. Phil McDonald suggested that in July or August he will present to the Board a more refined preliminary 2018 budget proposal. This will allow the Board a greater window of time to prioritize near term and longer term budgeting priorities and to begin planning financing strategies.

Greg Schramek reiterated the Board's interest in financial planning much further than 12 months ahead, especially on major priorities.

PROPOSAL FOR SALES/AUCTIONS

Greg Schramek summarized a proposal from a member of the Board of Advisors to create a secondary market for woodturned art, as well as a place where artists can sell their original work. John had a large collection and found he could not benefit from donating it because there was no defined secondary market or comparable sales. Current artists have only about seven galleries to represent their work. Details about the program were discussed in addition to questions raised about fit with the AAW mission and logistics of introducing this new program.

David Heim stated that the proposal creates an online gallery and suggested that a cobranded affiliation with Etsy, 1stdibs.com, or similar commerce platform, be explored. The Board decided that further study of the proposal was needed.

RECESS

The Board meeting recessed for Wednesday, June 21, 2017, at 3:06 p.m.

CONTINUATION

The Board meeting resumed on Monday, June 26, 2017, at 8:00 a.m.

SYMPOSIUM DEBRIEF

In addition to Board and staff previously noted, also joining the meeting were volunteers Rick Baker and Ana Lappegard; staff members Jane Charbonneau and Tib Shaw; and, Conference Direct staff Patty Keeley and Susan Tobin. Each individual described Symposium successes and areas for improvement. Below is a summary of the comments by topic area.

Monday, June 26, 2017, 8:00 a.m. **Symposium Debrief**

In attendance were Board members Jeff Brockett, Joe Dickey, John Ellis, Wayne Furr, David Heim, Greg Schramek, Molly Winton, and Louis Vadeboncoeur. Also present were volunteers Rick Baker and Ana Lappegard; staff Linda Ferber, Jane Charbonneau, Phil McDonald, Kim Rymer, and Tib Shaw; Editor Josh Friend; as well as Conference Direct staff Patty Keeley and Susan Tobin.

David Heim

- The Symposium was one of the best of the half dozen he has attended.
- Rooms were attractive, the AV was just what was needed, and the Instant Gallery was in a good location.
- Conference Direct did a great job.
- Food concessions in the hallways were too expensive.

Louis Vadeboncoeur

- Attendees loved the AV in the small demonstration rooms, but in the larger rooms people had trouble seeing the demonstrations.
- AAW needs to find a way to differentiate itself from the large regional symposiums. There's not currently enough difference.

Wayne Furr

- Tool room guys were on the spot and ahead of the game.

- Trade Show vendors seemed receptive to safety recommendations.
- One trade show vendor wanted to put work in the Instant Gallery without registering.

Susan Tobin and Patty Keely

- Make improvements to vendor packets and badging. Badges with colored stripe at the bottom would make it easier to identify specifically who is authorized in particular areas.
- Concession breakfasts should be located away from the Exhibit Hall.
- 15-minute warning (over the PA system) before Trade Show closing.
- Banquet staging of food needs to be on the kitchen level, logistics for back up food options need to be determined, Conference Direct needs to be in the kitchen to ensure food is delivered without a delay of service. A plated dinner is not a good option.
- Trade Show should be open or closed and hall all must be completely cleared to secure it.
- The CD managers will confer and present their observations and ideas.
- A ShopVac would be nice for clean-up.

Rick Baker

- Overall the AV went well, although the screens were too small for the larger rooms.
- AV set-up was rough. There are many old things that are being done with old equipment.
- He recommends camera boom in all demo rooms.
- Problems with dual camera system.
- Recording of videos started well, however Harvest tinkered with things and the quality went downhill. Larger cities have better the technical support. Between the rehearsal and dinner, Harvest changed their crew who often could not be located. AAW wanted HDI all the way through, however Harvest converted to SDI so they could use older equipment.
- The banquet went too long, and he wants to be in the loop earlier.
- There are better solutions that to have the meeting planners clean up the sawdust.
- The signage needs to be better and be to scale.
- Location of registration restricted entry to the 2000-2100 demonstration rooms.

Joe Dickey

- Conference Direct did a great job.
- The AV was good.

John Ellis

- AAW Trade Show is a point of differentiation from regionals. Vendors have a huge cost to come to the AAW Trade Show and it needs to be worthwhile for them.
- Placement of food service to Trade Show needs to be reviewed.
- Recommends red closed signs and green open signs for Trade Show.
- Board meet and greet was a failure because of its placement.

Kathleen Duncan

- Instant Gallery: Produce non-date-specific forms.
- Instant Gallery: Review the placement of DIY and Craft tables.

- Instant Gallery: Need single point of entry for security to check badges and get accurate count.
- Banquet: Need a slideshow going for the people who are done eating to watch.
- Instant Gallery: Water dispensers need to be kept full. It was hot. People setting up drank all of the water and no one refilled the water.
- Trade Show: All board members should go around and be more present. Conference coordinators should introduce themselves.

Ana Lappegard

- Security was an issue because people were wandering the halls during set up.
- Maps: Don't include hallways attendees can't go in on maps.
- Harvest: Timing and lack of communication. Need to text vs. phone calls. Need to say they are on it or that it's done.
- Demo Rooms: Need bigger tarps.
- Demonstrators: In the contracts with demonstrators, AV needs to know about any demonstrator presentations (PowerPoints, etc.) ahead of time. Some demonstrators brought Macs but no adaptors.
- Demo Rooms: All the rooms were full.

Linda Ferber

- Demonstrators: Work on demonstrator logistics because too few showed up for orientation meeting.
- Trade Show: Mostly good feedback, although some vendors had complaints. Move out went rapidly.

Tib Shaw

- Exhibitions: Board support and guard service were terrific. Set up was simple. Received lots of help from conference coordinator. Color coded badges would be great.
- There was no sweep up service scheduled before Exhibitions opening event.
- Lights out Thursday evening was a strange occurrence.

Josh Friend

- Members meeting was not well attended. Need to promote it more. Suggests having it on Saturday combined with a Board meet and greet.

Greg Schramek

- Most issues were not noticeable to attendees.
- Allow for the fact there will be problems and have rehearsals earlier.
- Provide an ambassador to manage the experience of the special people who are there getting awards. The ambassador needs to be given responsibilities to take care of any issues.

Phil McDonald

- Will need to thoroughly review both the advance planning and the onsite execution.
- Banquet: Will need to treat Saturday evening failures like an airline disaster as a number of factors contributed, starting earlier in the day. Need more contingency planning to be able to respond more effectively. Will need to layout factually what happened with the caterer.
- Symposium educational sessions and vendor experience help differentiate AAW from regionals.
- Need to identify emerging interests. Segmented turners chapter president said there was nothing for them. Consider adding modules.
- On Friday evening next year, need to consider people from east coast time zone and reenvision the Friday evening auction.
- Too many overlapping responsibilities leaving little breathing room for staff, which can cause a domino effect when there are problems.

Jeff Brockett

- Lots of time invested with Conference Direct who was open to comments, suggestions.
- Local volunteers did an outstanding job, top to bottom, and were flexible.
- AAW took a huge gamble on AV and made a significant change to total HD.
- Move registration area and put merchandise at the back.
- The raffle location was poor and probably affected sales. Move it up front.
- Harvest vendors get a "C"; their advance commitments.
- Security: The Trade Show needs to be open or closed.
- Regionals are always in the same location, which is a point of differentiation from AAW. AAW is at the mercy of a new location each and every year.
- Handout Book: Content about the Instant Gallery needs to be updated.
- Average attendee doesn't know of the minor problems.
- AAW tries to push too much into Thursday by doing three things at the same time.

John Ellis

- The Board should meet in Portland as a planning meeting, not just touring meeting.

Rick Baker

- The video volunteers spend the 10-12 hours standing. We need to bring in food for those people.

Greg Schramek

- Believes most people left symposium with a good taste in their mouth.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Louis Vadeboncoeur suggested an August Board discussion, which involves the Fundraising Committee, about financing the IT Infrastructure Initiative and Woodturning FUNdamentals.

David Heim proposed a retreat with John Ellis, Joe Dickey, Phil McDonald for concentrated brainstorming.

Greg Schramek noted the Board gets a lot out of the face-to-face interplay.

CLOSING REMARKS

None

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- July 19 - Teleconference
- August 23 - Teleconference
- September 20 - Teleconference
- October 18 - Teleconference
- November 18 and 19 in St. Paul
- December 13 - Teleconference

All teleconference meetings are scheduled for 6:00 p.m. central time.

ADJOURNMENT

Jeff Brockett made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kathleen Duncan seconded the motion and the meeting concluded at 10:30 a.m. central daylight time, on Monday, June 26, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Duncan, Secretary