

VWS Board Meeting Notes

January 17, 2015

Attendees: Mark Nielsen, Carlton Annis, Lynn Pratt, Martin LaLonde, Diane Bell, Tony Conner, Charles Norris-Brown, Michelle, & Adrienne Fisher

Missing: Adrienne Fiske, Kate Jackson and Rob O'brien

Agenda: Approve the last meetings notes

No notes were taken during the annual meeting in October. An article in November Snippets summarized all the items on that agenda. See the article below that was approved by Tony Conner during this phone conference .

VWS Annual Business Meeting 2014

October 19th 2014

Meeting Minutes:

45 VWS members attended The VWS Annual Business Meeting at Middlebury Inn. Here is a brief reporting of the business we conducted.

The members passed the 2015 budget showing \$26,155 of income and \$26,155 of expenses with a unanimous vote. We are projecting 2014 to end with a negative balance of about \$4,000. This can be roughly explained with the vote in March to create the VWS Education Fund from our reserves and to spend \$3000 that had not been budgeted. The remaining \$1,000 relates to the decision to send the second bus to the MFA in January even though it was not full. The 2015 Hub budget breakdown is:

- *Brattleboro* \$440
- *Burlington/St. Albans* \$900
- *Manchester/ Bennington* \$430
- *Middlebury/Rutland* \$520
- *Montpelier/Stow* \$520
- *Newport/St. Johnsbury* \$400
- *New Hampshire* \$480
- *White River Junction* \$600
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The members unanimously elected the slate of candidates for open positions on the board for 2015 after a brief review of their qualifications. They are:

- **Diane Bell** - Secretary
- **Carton Annis, CPA** – Treasurer
- **Charles Norris-Brown** – Co-Director of Exhibitions
- **Martin LaLonde** – Director of Programs
- **Kate Jackson and Lynn Pratt** - Co-Directors of Communications

- **Adrienne Fisher and Adrienne Fisk** - Co-Directors of Volunteers

The members thanked outgoing directors; **Amanda Amend, Claudia Carl, Reggie Springer, Sarah Rosedahl, and Loretta Weitzel.**

The members recognized all our volunteers and recognized **Don Dalton and Lynn Pratt** as our Co-Volunteers of 2014.

Signatory Membership Certificates were given to **Charles Norris-Brown, Sarah Rosedahl, Lynn Cummings, and Pam Dexter.**

Amanda Amend honored the memory of **Larry Coffin, VWS.**

Mark Nielsen reported on Policy changes and the New VWS Education Fund, including the creation of our new Development Committee tasked to raise funds for the VWS. The committee is Co-Chaired by **Jan Olmstead** and **Perry Williamson.**

Pam Dexter reported on the many and varied Hub Activities including a slide show of photos of some of these activities. She also reported that we were now coming into our second generation of Hub Point people. The changes are:

- Brattleboro; **Lynn Hoeft** has been replaced by **Nancy Dimauro**, nedimauro@myfairpoint.net and **Molly Martin**, molar56@sover.net.
- Burlington/StAlbans ; **Lynn Cummings** will step down at end of year. No replacement as yet.
- Montpelier/Stow; **Terry Hodgdon**, tlhodgdon@comcst.net is now the Point Person, **Lisa Beech**, stowebeach@aol.com will serves as the Assistant Point Person.

Robert O'Brien reported on the upcoming shows for 2015 and 2016 with known dates.

Ann Pember provided the very educational demonstration for the afternoon.

Claudia Carl wrapped up the meeting with the raffle which raised \$200 for new teaching DVDs for the VWS library.

Acting Secretary:

Tony Conner, Vice-President

The notes from the Strategic Planning meeting in November were also approved.

Treasurer's Report – Carlton Annis

- The report was not reconciled. The treasurer's two reports that were emailed today were accepted subject to audit.
- Regarding the Education Fund of \$5000, there was some discussion about where that number should show up. Carlton explained his position and the report was approved.

Director of Communications – Lynn Pratt

Lynn and Kate talked with Don Dalton about taking on the website and realized that the communications position would never be filled again if that happened. It's too big a job. There are, however, pieces that should be updated monthly so Lynn and Kate will do that task. When something is changed in the Snippets the ladies will update on the website.

Note: Don Dalton would like to step down as web master at some point soon so the search is on.

Down the road, our new education program will be represented on our website. It will be visible on the home page with a link for more details on a separate page.

Lynn has volunteered to head up and manage pictures, feedback etc. from the educational program.

Lynn and Kate are handling Facebook on a tag team basis at the moment. A link to Facebook will be added to the website.

The brochure will be printed as a postcard after February.

Mark would like to add a line re: the education fund. The completion is the spring meeting on May 31, 2015 when they will be distributed to the membership. Diane suggested that Gotprint.com is a good resource for printing these.

Carlton mentioned he has a large supply of notecards and envelopes. They will come in handy later for thank you notes.

Hub Director's report – Pam Dexter

The May 16, point person rally will happen in Montpelier. Place to be determined. She sent out a calendar of events to the point people prior to this meeting.

Burlington /St. Albans hub position is open. Invitations will be sent to those members to attend the rally to take over leadership making sure this hub stays healthy.

Pam is stepping down at the end of the year.

Insurance covers all shows including hub shows. Claims should go through Mark Nielsen. Deductibles are uncertain. Any claim should be a serious claim because our rates may go up as a result. Mark will check with Insurance agent to review coverage and deductible level if there is one.

Director of Exhibitions – Charles Norris Brown

Fall Award Show - Taylor Gallery . Details to come as are details of 2016 shows.

The show dates for the spring OPEN show are April 23 May 31. This exhibition is at the Emile Gruppe Gallery in Jericho. Opening reception Sunday, May 3, 2-5PM. Paintings to be delivered on Monday , April 20, 9-5pm. Pick up date is Monday June 1, 9 – 5. Reception drinks provided by gallery. Members are asked to bring food, no dips.

Eric Gottesman 's art show manager will be used to manage this show .This process will start in early February. The Gruppe Gallery has room for 40 paintings; Limit 40" in any direction. The Gallery takes 35% on sales.

Two Images will be submitted to the gallery by April 1, with a \$25 entry fee. March 20th is the deadline for online submissions. The prospectus will be emailed soon.

Rob and Charles are still looking for a juror who will be paid \$250.

By the way, that's OPEN STUDIO weekend. Emilie has requested that any interested VWS member come by and paint during the days of 5/23 and 5/24, 10 AM – 5PM.

Director of Programs - Martin LaLonde

Our next event is the spring meeting on May 31, at the Lake Morey Inn. The plan is to invite attendees to bring paintings for "show and tell." Peter Huntoon will do a two- hour demo after the luncheon.

Martin is soliciting some funding for miscellaneous stuff or goody bags.

Mark mentioned this might be a time to mention the education program. Charles could share the photo book from last year's effort in the Northeast Kingdom school ...10-15 minutes.

Attendees will be invited to plein-air paint the lovely grounds at the Lade Morey Inn. This will be optional.

Other suggestions: Another field trip in 2015, or a discussion about the parameters of artistic copyright;. What's involved in having a show? How does one plan and put together a hub meeting?

No decisions have been made yet for the October 17th meeting. Potentially, it will be at the Middlebury Inn again.

Frank Ebert's workshop in 2015 is in October, 2014. A flyer will be available at the spring meeting. The June 27 to July 1, 2016 workshop with Jeannie McGuire at the Landgrave Inn has been scheduled.

Membership Director – Michelle LeBoeff

Michelle reported that: The membership numbers include: 2013-- 257; 2014-- 221; 2015, only 70 (Betty probably hasn't entered some paid-up members). There are three new members so far. Michelle follows up with a note to people who have sent in their checks etc. and these have been appreciated.

Mark will send out a reminder email to those who are delinquent. We assume 200 members when setting up the yearly budget. We have 25 to 30 new members per year. We must stay vigilant about maintaining our membership in order to achieve our goals..

It's important to reach out to other members to get their opinion of the society—are we doing the right things? Is anyone unhappy about something? Let Mark know if anyone hears any negative remarks.

The official due date for dues is January 1st. Sometime after that, a lapsed letter is sent to people who haven't paid their dues. That usually works for most. At the end of 2015, people who in arrears for two years get a warning in the form of a termination letter. Then at the end of 2015, and dues still haven't been received, they are terminated. If they get terminated and they are a signatory member, they have to start over. That usually does the trick.

Adrienne thinks maybe this process should be tweaked at some point. It may be too lenient. Maybe there should be a reinstatement fee . That may be discussed at the next meeting.

Adrienne may be asked by Charles to assist with the Gruppe show – two lists, food and demonstrators. Also help with the hanging and removal of paintings. And finally, Martin may need some help with the spring meeting.

Educational Program Discussion

Re: the 100% commitment of the board – Some personal financial or a personal commitment of hours is required..

This is a board requirement every single year when we go out to solicit funds. Perry said it's not the amount, it's the fact that is something. Most are thinking in the \$25 to \$50 range. Some are talking about hours and not money. If Mark does not hear from anyone who is not committed, we will go forward.

A pledge should be sent in to Mark for the monies (by the middle of March). A grant request for matching funds with the Vermont Arts Council is in the works.

Pam asked if the membership is on board with this effort. Mark agrees with this worry so a direct survey should be sent out to make certain they are in agreement. It will be presented at the annual meeting again. We need to pay attention to the demand – be fair—and be accountable. The response so far is that this is a terrific program. Nothing negative has been filtered back.

Carlton asked about what we are selling and why we've just chosen just public schools. We have to limit the demand because of the limited number (60 kits) we can provide. Carlton may question that we are not all inclusive enough and thinks the VT Arts Council may pick up on that. Mark will ask his mentor there at the VAC that question.

The answer to the 2nd question—what are our lofty goals? What are we trying to accomplish? We’re trying to think big. What is our inspiration, the spiritual part of what we’re trying to do. We’ll wait to hear from Jan and Perry to help wordsmith this question.

Discussion on Carlton’s proposals:

1. After some discussion on Carlton’s suggestion to include the Treasurer as a signer to the reserve account the following motion was made and unanimously approved: The reserve account should require two authorized signatures, one being the treasurer and the other a current officer of the board. Carlton will initiate these changes with bank.
2. The Education Fund should become a “dedicated” fund, not a “restricted” one. This gives us more flexibility down the road if we change our minds about where the monies will go. Carlton made the motion that this fund become a dedicated fund. It was seconded and approved.
3. Reorganizing our bylaws. They are too lengthy. We might think about changing to an “operational” manual. The necessary language is still within the bylaws. We shouldn’t be worried about the IRS auditing us. This effort is primarily an editing task to parse what should be a by-law and what should be an operating manual. This effort is not envisioned to be altering the policy work done to date. Carlton will run with this and then report back in a few months.

Meeting adjourned at 4:07pm

Notes submitted by
Diane Bell, VWS Secretary