

May 3, 2017

1. Call to Order and Existence of Quorum

- a. April Blum (President) called the meeting to order at 8:05 with seven Board members present. At 8:17 Judy Oppenheim joined the meeting via Skype, constituting a quorum. Present: Charlie Baum (VP), Mike Livingston (Programs), Heather Livingston (Newsletter), Ingrid Gorman (Publicity), Jerry Stein (Treasurer), and Tim Livengood (At-Large). Absent: Kim Gandy (Secretary), Penelope Weinberger (Dance), Steve Kaufman and Steve Winick (both At Large).

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

- a. February Minutes were approved.
- b. April Minutes were distributed by email and copies were provided. There was a Resolution regarding payment for logo design that did not indicate whether the resolution was made, nor by whom. Approval of the April Minutes has been tabled until clarification can be received from the Secretary.

3. Action Item Reports:

- a. Independent audit/Combined Federal Campaign Jerry Stein has interviewed or will soon interview 3 or 4 audit firms which specialize in small non-profits such as FSGW, and believes that such a firm will be a better choice than the firm originally selected. Funds for this audit were originally allocated several years ago, so further resolution is not needed at this time.
- b. Pat McGee archival materials retrieval. (April) No change this month.
- c. Hope and a Home. Tim Livengood reported that the April presentation was by "Groovy Nate," who does a music and comedy show. Very favorable reception, with about twenty children, ages 2 to 15, five college students and three adults. One of the adults is from Guinea and has local connections with that community. Tim will do some outreach and see if this Guinean volunteer can connect FSGW with some performers.
- d. Grapevine report: Elaine Moray from New Mexico and Tony Toledo (actual name Anthony J. Boss) from Boston. Each already paid \$130. There were two open-mic tellers, Kristin Pedemonti and Emily Crews. Audience of 30, Donations shared by tellers were \$329.
- e. Washington Folk Festival Manual. Charlie is in the midst of final prep, so no change this month.
- f. Musical Theater adaptation (Mike) See below.
- g. Distribution of Donated 78s and Books. (April). Betsy Platt is still working on this project, and April has emailed the daughter of the original donor, who emailed back that there may be more material. .
- h. WFFL. (April) April and Jerry need to meet with GEPPAC staff to alert them to the possible/probable change of venue for WFF. April will sound out GEPPAC about what concessions they might be willing to make to keep WFF there. But FSGW cannot continue to lose \$15-20 thousand dollars every year. One solution might be to make it a one-day festival from 11 am to 11 pm (only ONE day of transportation costs); no tents; evening dance.
- i. Alternate WFF: Charlie has talked briefly with Lisa Martin, who programs the Silver Spring venue. There are security problems (drugs, etc.). Friends of the Silver Spring Library might host the Storytelling Stage. Busy Graham is working with the library to negotiate using the Library's first floor as a space. No announcement regarding changes at this point. A one-day festival at Silver Spring from 10 am to midnight is a possibility.
- j. Callers Practicum. This went very well; 8 callers plus several additional dancers.

4. Wish List for Bylaw Revision. This is a compilation of suggestions for changes. This appears on the Minutes and Agenda as a long-term Action Item.

- a. Easier method to amend Bylaws.
- b. Change to membership structure – one person, one membership. All members' dependents get the membership rate for events. Eventual elimination of discount for married couples.

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- c. Change one Board position to IT Liaison
- d. Address "corporate" issues (Revels membership). Corporations cannot vote, and therefore need a different type of membership, such as "affiliation."
- e. Election of a completely unopposed slate (by acclamation?) Should we allow for write-ins?
- f. Elect only HALF of the Board each year? Or elect Board for two-year terms – i.e. elections held only every other year instead of every year. This might also require rethinking the "five-year" limit.
- g. Eliminate the differentiation between "Programs" and "Concerts" which is no longer reflected in the Board positions.
- h. Victor Thuroni, an FSGW member, helped with the bylaws last time, and April has already ascertained that he would be willing to help again.

5. Old Business

a. *Logo*

- i. Ingrid asked Debbie to incorporate an instrument into the proposed logo, but it doesn't work.
- ii. Ingrid and Mike have consulted further about the logo. It needs to be fresh, inclusive, inviting, open, playful. Ingrid reminds us that people coming to our event know who we are. They are waiting for a final design approval before getting additional promotional material ready. Mike reminded the Board that although the blocks logo might look similar to some others, there's a reason for that – it's an effective design. The purpose of a logo is to brand our events and differentiate them from other folk events. The point is "FSGW" and the blocks, with their simplicity, work where more elaborate designs do not.
- iii. The Web Migration Project Manager will need the logo for the wireframes.
- iv. April suggested that using the "F" from the current logo – which is intentionally like the f-hole on a violin, would provide the "music" reference, and would tie the new logo to the old one. Charlie Baum, who is one of those who wanted some sort of musical motif, indicated that this would be acceptable. Mike suggested trying some softer, non-Microsoft colors. Ingrid is not worried about being confused with Microsoft.
- v. Mike needs the design finalized by mid-June.
- vi. Heather and Jennifer Woods will put an article about the FSGW logo history in the Newsletter.
- vii. April reminded us that there will be blow-back, as many FSGW members object to change.

b. *Web Migration*

- i. Project Manager, Beth Soderberg has moved forward with assigning tasks. April has several to complete (especially a variety of "landing pages" for various events).
- ii. Tim asked about using Wild Apricot to send mailings, and has requested training. April will put him in touch with Lynn Baumeister. April pointed out that WA specializes in small non-profits that are membership-based, and that WA produces regular programs on increasing membership..
- iii. April has found a fake address in the database. She will pass this information along.

c. *Elections*

- i. Paper ballots have been mailed. .
- ii. To consider for the next round of Bylaws:
 - (1) Is it possible to require that all ballots be electronic?
 - (2) Is it possible to elect a slate by acclamation?
 - (3) We must allow write-ins, but April notes that all write-ins must be members, and therefore to permit them will require some sort of verification, or, alternatively, a disclaimer on the electronic ballot. .

d. **GEPPAC Annual Gala**

- i. The only current Board member who can attend appears to be Tim, who will bring his daughter.
- ii. Current Board members will ask long-time members who have contributed their time and talents to FSGW.

e. **New Annual Life Membership Award .**

- i. Article III, Section C of the FSGW bylaws as amended July 2008 states: "Honorary memberships may be extended to individuals only on the unanimous approval of the board and may be with or without limit of duration." From that premise, and without requiring any change in the bylaws or incurring any significant cost, Mike Livingston proposes to establish an annual award of a lifetime membership, the Claude Martin Memorial Honorary Life Membership. This will effectively constitute an FSGW Young Artist Hall of Fame. The annual membership would be conferred on significantly accomplished but still rising Washington-area folk artists under age 30, selected annually in September by a committee reporting to the Board of Directors for confirmation in accordance with the Bylaws.
- ii. The screening and selection Committee should consist of:
 - (1) FSGW Program Chair;
 - (2) FSGW Membership Chair;
 - (3) FSGW President or another person chosen by the President;
 - (4) A member of Claude Martin's family or another person chosen by the Martin family; and
 - (5) A distinguished former FSGW Board member chosen by the Board of Directors.
- iii. Criteria: The award would be presented to a musician, singer, dance teacher or caller, storyteller, or other traditional artist who is:
 - (1) Recommended by the five-member screening committee (see above) to the Board of Directors;
 - (2) Deemed geographically eligible; and
 - (3) Under 30 years old at the time the award is presented.
- iv. Discussion:
 - (1) There was general consensus regarding the age limitation, although Tim noted that storytellers tend to be "late bloomers."
 - (2) The award can be made to sound technicians, organizers, promoters; Charlie Baum would like to add instrument makers.
 - (3) Geographic eligibility is less easy to specify, but may be left to the discretion of the selection committee.
- v. Resolution: "I move that a Claude Martin Honorary Lifetime Membership award be established, consisting of a lifetime membership to FSGW, to be conferred annually on a significantly-accomplished but still rising Washington-area folk artist, artisan, or group, selected annually in September by a committee reporting to the Board of Directors for confirmation in accordance with the Bylaws." Moved by Tim Livengood, seconded by Mike Livingston. Motion passed unanimously.
- vi. The Board reserved the right to change the age limit, but Mike noted that the change should be made prior to October 7, 2017, as the establishment of the Award will be announced at the Claude Martin Memorial Concert.

f. **Staging the Musical "Esley"**

- i. This idea was introduced by Mike some months ago, and has been on the "Action Item" list.
- ii. Mike has more specific numbers from the writer/producer of *Esley* (a musical about Lesley Riddle and the Carter Family).

- (1) So far it has only been staged in Asheville, NC.
- (2) Ash Devine plays Maybelle Carter; Saro Lynch-Thomason plays one of the Carter sisters. Lesley Riddle was Maybelle Carter's African-American guitar teacher and a source of much of the Carters' early repertoire, although he never received credit and was little known.
- (3) Rough estimate for the production is \$15k-20k, NOT counting the cost of the venue.
 - (a) Two weekends, ten performances (NB April notes that a weekend is usually only FOUR performances – Friday night, Sat matinee, Sat night, Sunday matinee).
 - (b) Payment for cast and crew, \$100 per performance plus reasonable per diem
 - (c) Home stays would cut cost somewhat.
 - (d) Modest royalty to the author
 - (e) April asked if this includes sets, props, and costumes. If those are not included, they would need to be rented.
 - (f) Lighting? Backstage personnel? (Makeup, stage manager, lighting techs, sound, etc.)
- iii. The ball is in our court at this point. The project probably requires an ad hoc committee. It will require grants, sponsorships, etc. One possibility is the Oprah Winfrey stage at the African-American History museum.
- iv. Charlie Baum notes that asking a theater to book two weekends is a big commitment on their part.
- v. Heather suggested reaching out to Revels; Ingrid notes that Chris Lindsay works at Native American museum and might have useful contacts. April points out that Library of Congress might also be interested.

6. New Business:

- a. **Sound Equipment** (tabled for next meeting, when Mike will be present)
 - i. Does FSGW need additional sound equipment? April notes that the "small" FSGW system lives at her house and asked Mike if another small system would be useful for concerts. Mike indicates that the needs vary from needing nothing to a full set up.
 - ii. Does FSGW need to train sound engineers or at least ensure familiarity with FSGW equipment?
 - iii. Dan Kahn, who is the FSGW sound equipment coordinator, will provide a list of FSGW equipment, and will be asked to come to a Board meeting for follow up.
 - iv. Heather and Charlie suggest a semi-annual "Learn to be a Sound Tech" workshop. Charlie further notes that at least some of the FSGW equipment does not have a physical manual.
 - v. Should FSGW establish a Sound Committee? NB: Sometimes the sound tech is paid, sometimes it's a volunteer.
- b. **Insurance Renewal**
 - i. Jerry Stein provided a list of addresses by email for insurance coverage. There have been several corrections and additions.
 - ii. Jerry didn't get a clear response regarding house concerts.
 - iii. April notes that the insurance used to be much more expensive.
- c. **Additional Committees**
 - i. Mike notes that we are presenting more concerts than he can run, and there are some concerts he has declined for lack of personnel to run the show. Volunteer incentives have not (so far) made much of a difference. It's mostly the same people.
 - ii. How can we recruit?
 - (1) Announcements at concerts and dances.

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- (2) Ingrid notes that high school students need SSL hours. A student could tweet and do other social media, post flyers, etc.
- (3) April suggested checking with Marketing classes at local community colleges, to see if anyone might be willing.
- (4) Mike suggested asking Ruby and Adelaide to plug this on their Takoma Radio show.
- (5) Mike wants clarification that comps are good at concerts and dances, regardless of where they were earned.
- (6) We should keep track of volunteer hours for grant writing purposes. It's a useful statistic.

d. *Email Blast Policy*

- i. The question arose because of a request for inclusion of a "meet the author" event .
- ii. Ingrid notes that FSGW events are always included, but that non-FSGW events should be non-commercial, and the usual assumption that attendees will buy a copy of the book seems to cross the line.
- iii. Mike points out that our email blast is a sort of currency. Should FSGW be giving this service away for free? What about saying "\$1 off if you say you saw it in the FSGW eblast?"

e. *Library of Congress Event*

- i. Steve Winick asked that the Board approve an FSGW co-sponsored event at 7 pm on July 21, but there is no need for funding, sound equipment or a sound tech. LoC simply requests that it get into the Newsletter and into the eblast (*see above discussion).

7. *Next Meeting and Motion to Adjourn.*

- a. The next regular Board meeting will be Wednesday, June 7, 2017.
- b. April called for a Motion to Adjourn and several Board members simultaneously moved and seconded. The motion passed and we adjourned at 10 pm..