

**Society of American Travel Writers
Western Chapter**

**Board Meeting
June 10, 2017, 10:00 a.m.
Jessamine Room, Hyatt Place, Charleston, SC**

Board Members

Present: Christine Loomis, chair; Doug MacKenzie, 2nd vice chair; Lori Michimoto, secretary; Erik Elvejord, treasurer; Rich Grant, active-at-large; Gaylene Ore, associate representative; Paul Lasley, immediate past chair

Absent: Eric Lindberg, 1st vice chair

Proceedings:

- Meeting called to order at 10:14 a.m. by C. Loomis

- Finances
 - E. Elvejord reported funds at \$91,352 as of 4/30/17 Schwab report. Western Chapter has more operating funds than any other Chapter.
 - C. Loomis shared that we need to consider using available funds to benefit membership. Active Laura Daily and Associate Gordon Thorne have suggested paying for a professional broadcast from the Society's Portland Convention so non-attendees can interact and participate. E. Elvejord estimated cost at \$15,000.
 - E. Elvejord said we need to decide how to tap the funds while considering future consequences. Would like to push principle to \$100,000. He suggested that we could use the previous year's income to estimate how much we can spend. If a bad year, we could tap the principle up to pre-determined amount.
 - E. Elvejord reported that at the Charleston Chapter meeting, Barbados is sponsoring \$3,000 for the Writing Awards Luncheon, giving us a surplus for the Writing Awards. All registration fees except \$30 per person go to Charleston; \$10 of the \$30 goes to Kellen.
 - R. Grant shared that NAJTA makes \$500,000 per year by charging more and awarding less. Entry fee is \$500 and certificates are awarded. Gold awards include a donated three-night hotel stay.
 - C. Loomis suggested using available funds for expenses related to future Shoot Outs and the prizes.
 - C. Loomis said the Society's Opportunity Budget may be available for Shoot Out. Requests need to be made 8-9 months in advance. P. Lasley and E. Elvejord will determine if we can apply for the Society's Opportunity Budget to use for Shoot Out, and if yes, how much we can plan on being available.
 - P. Lasley shared that the Society has determined the Opportunity Budget is to be used for Professional Development and anything that promotes membership. There is no requirement to get that money from ACA every year. Our distribution determines part of class action suit. Active Tom Adkinson sits on board of ACA. No guarantee to get funds annually and the amount.

- Sponsorships
 - C. Loomis suggested that a sponsorship chair needs to be assigned to future Chapter Meetings.
 - E. Elvejord said the sponsorship chair should be part of the meeting committee since the value of sponsorships changes depending on the meeting.
 - R. Grant said the challenge of seeking sponsorships is the natural companies to approach are the same companies the meeting host would approach for support.

- SATW Website
 - C. Loomis discussed challenge of new Chapter Chairs with having to search for governing documents.
 - C. Loomis wants to appoint someone to work with L. Michimoto and Kellen to manage Western Chapter section of Website to upload Bylaws, Operation Manual and other important documents in one place.
 - E. Elvejord volunteered to contact Marla to find out who is the webmaster.

- Future Meeting Sites
 - Associate Nancy Vaughn reported that the Society requested all Chapter RFPs be compiled into one document and she volunteered to merge. C. Loomis and P. Lasley reviewed and provided suggestions. N. Vaughn submitted a 2-1/2 to three page document and the Society is currently reviewing.
 - N. Vaughn and Active Stan Wawer shared interested sites:
 - Phoenix considering for May or early June 2018.
 - Vancouver initiated contact for 2020.
 - Huntington Beach interested via Associate Kimberly Miller.
 - Associate Peggy Bendel has a couple clients who may be interested.
 - Quebec City may consider for 2018 or 2019.
 - C. Loomis reported that the Society still considering combining Chapters' meetings. One challenge is some potential sites are not interested in certain Chapters because they are located within their region.
 - N. Vaughn suggested that meeting attendance could be limited, similar to a Freelance Council meeting on a cruise ship. A preset number of cabins are blocked and only that number gets to participate.
 - R. Grant suggested cutting meeting host costs by eliminating breakfast and airport transfers due to these types of expenses being hard to secure sponsorship. N. Vaughn pointed out that members would complain. P. Lasley suggested getting Uber discount for airport transfers.
 - N. Vaughn shared suggestions for future meeting chairs including that different story angles be shared in advance and to involve local Associates to provide sponsorships.

- Membership
 - R. Grant suggested the Board making an Action to support Doug Warner with Charleston CVB for membership.
 - P. Lasley said that Associates should be able to submit a business card if employed by a CVB to qualify for membership, similar to editors.
 - D. MacKenzie suggested that SATW focus on promoting the quality of journalists. Millennial publicists don't understand the quality of SATW journalists including their accreditation vs other organizations such as PRSA.

- Society Board of Directors
 - P. Lasley reported that 27 pages have been removed from the Operation Manual; the Society is trying to eliminate some committees; and the Society lost \$500,000 during the last two national conventions.
 - C. Loomis reported on the continued discussion of regional vs Chapter meetings. The discussion includes eliminating Chapters and limiting regional meetings to east and west for four chapters with Freelance and Editors still holding independent meetings. The new Board is very progressive and is thinking of rebranding SATW to make the organization relevant, and the process of how sites are chosen and what we require. Kellen is trying to streamline SATW. There will need to be an increase in membership dues.
 - P. Lasley brought attention to the diverse makeup of membership including those whose entire identity are tied into SATW and the SATW press card.

- Writing Awards
 - Judging handled by the University of Missouri School of Journalism. Judge coordinator sent C. Loomis suggestions to restructure award categories based on submissions. Suggested included:
 - Eliminate Books. Only 2-3 entries received. Could move to Lowell Thomas Awards.
 - Replace Internet and Newspapers with content categories such as: foreign travel, U.S. travel, travel tips, food/dining.
 - Eliminate Service.
 - Keep Travel Trade and Non-traditional
 - Add Photo category.
 - E. Elvejord suggested that the meeting chair suggest categories based on the destination. C. Loomis said that categories need to be pre-determined and consistent.
 - C. Loomis said that not all categories sustainable. She will email Board with judge coordinator's suggested list to review and provide feedback.
 - P. Lasley commended C. Loomis for securing the University of Missouri School of Journalism, which has added prestige to the awards.

- Operations Manual
 - L. Michimoto reported that the Operations Manual has not been updated. The previous Board was waiting for the revised Bylaws to pass.
 - C. Loomis said that the Operations Manual should be reviewed annually.
 - L Michimoto volunteered to handle initial editing based on previous work on document with P. Lasley and Active Maribeth Mellin.
 - C. Loomis said that the revisions should be completed and approved by Board prior to the national convention.

- Motion made by E. Elvejord, second by D. MacKenzie to adjourn at 12:16 p.m. Motion carried.

Minutes submitted by Secretary Lori Michimoto, July 11, 2017

Approved by Chair Christine Loomis, August 5, 2017