

# New England Woodcarvers Executive Board Meeting

March 20, 2010

Middlesex Community College – Building 5 (Trustees House), Conference Room

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Roger Melanson, M. Paul Ward, Floyd Truitt, Mary Chouinard, Leo Lambert, Maria LaGoy, Robert Landry, Karen Seo

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Yvette Holladay

**GUESTS:** Lorne LaGoy, Jerry Grimes

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Roger Melanson called the meeting to order at 9:25 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** No minutes. (Karen arrived late, got immersed in the meeting, and forgot to hand them out.)

**\* ACTION ITEM:** Karen to distribute minutes from previous meeting (1/23/10) via email. Board to vote on them at next meeting.

## **REPORTS:**

### **Vice President (Paul Word)**

April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting

- This is a new date and needs to be mentioned in newsletter
- Angela Scofield will do a workshop at 9am but she will not be the guest speaker
- Still looking for guest speaker

He reported that Yvette is sick and not coming to today's Board meeting.

**\* ACTION ITEM:** All to send Yvette any items for the newsletter by 3/26.

June meeting – Helli Mayr will be the guest speaker.

### **Treasurer (Leo Lambert)**

Leo distributed

- A balance sheet as of 3/20/10. Total equity is \$33,599.70.
- A profit and loss statement for 7/1/09 though 3/20/10. P&L is \$1,665.56.
- Balance for Veterans charity (Tree of Hope) - \$1,229.87

<b>Workshop</b>	<b>\$Amt received</b>	<b>\$Amt owed</b>	<b># Signed Up</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Dates of workshop</b>
Pete LeClair	\$1,360	\$5	13	Full	May 8, 9
Helli Mayr	\$1430		11	1 opening left	June 3, 4, 5
Cheryl Dow	\$290		2	8 openings left	Oct. 18, 19, 20
Bob Guge	\$600		4	11 openings left	Oct 11-15
Frank Russell	0		0	14 openings	Sept 13-17

\* **BOARD DECISION:** The Board voted to accept the treasurer's report (unanimously).

**Membership Secretary (Mary Chouinard)**

Over the past couple of months, Mary sent \$570, \$210, and \$210 to Leo. Each time, there were a couple of new members and also people who re-joined. She sends out renewal reminders periodically. She plans to do the next round soon.

A number of Board members had either not received, had trouble opening, or run into formatting problems with the membership directory distributed by Yvette in January. Maria said to use the following email address for her [Marialagoy141@aol.com](mailto:Marialagoy141@aol.com).

\* **ACTION ITEM:** Mary to distribute latest version of membership directory to Board. She will distribute a version in Excel to those with Excel. She will work with Robert to produce .pdf version to distribute to those without Excel.

\* **BOARD DECISION** – The Board voted to accept the membership secretary's report (unanimously).

**Spirit of Wood Show (Roger Melanson)**

Roger distributed a draft of the brochure for the show

- Cover for the show brochure. Suggestions included: Make "Middlesex Community College, Bedford, Mass." less prominent. Make it clear that this is the location of the show. It is OK to have it be noticeable since having the show at MCC may be a draw.
- The featured artist will be Cheryl Dow.
- The show will continue to have the Birds of Prey.
- Roger wanted to have a panel in the brochure that indicated that this is the "10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Spirit of Wood" show. He proposed having a "Celebration of Youth Competition" to help recruit young people to wood carving. This event would be only for this year. It would differ from the regular youth category of the show in that it would have commemorative ribbons, gifts for winners, and 2 age groups. Roger distributed a draft write up of the rules. The Board agreed this was a good idea. Suggestions included clarifying in the brochure that entry is free and notifying Boy Scout organizations.

Roger is having new tags printed for the competition. He is trying to get enough to last 3-4 years.

New registration forms (for vendors) are being printed.

There will be a drawing featuring a 32" LCD flat screen TV, Foredom 5400 woodcarving kit, a fancy horse fretwork by Robert Anthony, and a Cape Forge chisel and knife set. He is having 700 booklets of chances printed up -- \$5/chance, \$20 for 5 chances.

There was discussion of whether there should be a Board-approved budget for the show. Roger observed that it was difficult to predict income and that the costs were basically constant except for bulk purchases of items (e.g., ribbons, registration forms) meant to supply needs for multiple years. Leo confirmed that expenses are fairly constant from year to year. The Board agreed that Roger should proceed without a formal budget, using his judgement and past experience to determine what are reasonable expenses and when to bring a particular expense to the Board for its approval.

Floyd observed that Mike and Karyn DePunte (Cape Forge) would be good speakers. He suggested asking them if they would make a run of a special knife as the prizes/gifts for the Youth Competition.

**Tree of Hope**

Just one ornament received so far. No information is available at present. The VA contact person has left.

### **Eagle Cane Project (Floyd Truitt)**

Just 3 new assignments were received since January. Two of them are going to Stan Williams.

Justin suggested giving Stan special recognition – Stan has carved and finished more canes than anyone else. NEWC is going to give him a special plaque at the June meeting. Floyd is doing some of the carving on it.

The club is still looking for someone to take over the coordinator job from Floyd. Roger has drafted a letter and started sending it to candidates. Floyd noted that the emphasis should be on completing the canes with the final decoration, not just completing the undecorated cane and then giving it to Floyd to complete.

Floyd's carving class at Townsend Senior Center is going well. He has a core group of 8-10 people, with 16-18 people showing up and more coming. He's been promoting NEWC. Fitchburg Sentinental recently interviewed him.

### **Diorama project (Roger Melanson)**

We have a serious problem. Louis reported that the Trustees of the Reservation have had funding shortfalls. As a result, they've decided to rent out their Doyle Conservation Center (Leominster) building and land. In this new scenario, the diorama won't fit in. So Rona is seeking out other locations for the diorama. In the meantime, the project is on hold. Fortunately, no expenditures on materials have been made yet.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Roger reported receiving email from Louis reporting on workshop status and a conversation with Cheryl Dow. Cheryl is going to donate items for the raffle, help Louis get information into Chip Chats, and do a demonstration on grease pencil highlights on carvings. She suggested that someone from NEWC ask Deft for a donation of spray cans of their matte finish.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Rent/Lease Search**

Roger et al. are still looking into rent/lease alternatives to MCC.

### **2010 NEWC Goals (Roger Melanson)**

Roger distributed an updated list that contained the 2 goals that were added at the last Board meeting:

- Develop job description for each NEWC officer position
- Create a training program for judging carving competitions

Floyd (Eagle Cane Coordinator) and Mary (Membership Secretary) had already turned in their job descriptions. Leo (Treasurer) and Karen (Secretary) distributed draft descriptions of their jobs at the meeting.

**\* ACTION ITEM:** Roger, Paul, Maria, Robert, and Floyd to each write a description of his/her NEWC job. Floyd and Maria will write up a job description for the "Member at Large" position. Roger will write up a job description for Committee Chair for the Spirit of Wood show.

Roger distributed his plan (steps/tasks to be done, who will do each task, by when the task will be done, how the task will be done) for the goal, "Revise NEWC By-Laws." Roger had put his name next to each task except for the final review/approval by the Board. Karen distributed her plan for "Increase Attendance at NEWC Meetings" but had not assigned a volunteer to any task. She asked how volunteers were to be found to do the tasks and observed that breaking down tasks into small chunks and adding the estimated hours required for each subtask might provide useful information for recruiting people to do the tasks. Roger said that fundamentally if

no one can be found to commit to doing a task by a specific date, then the task is undoable (at least until a volunteer can be found) and the goal is thus unachievable. The decision as to what level of detail to provide in one's plans and whether to include an estimated level of effort was left to the individual.

Roger suggested that all the plans be put in Excel thus creating a master sheet. The Board members agreed that this would be useful.

**\* ACTION ITEM:** All to send their 2010 goal sheets to Roger

## NEW BUSINESS

### Web Site Deletions

Todd Wissell sent Roger a list of items that unexpectedly disappeared from the NEWC web site. He's restored them. It is unclear whether the items were removed or the links were broken. No one on the Board was aware of the deletions or had any idea how it had happened. Only a few members (Yvette, Todd, Robert) have access (password controlled) to the web site that allows them to change the site (without resorting to black hat approaches). It could have been a mistake by the group providing the web host.

### Nominations – NEWC Member of the Year

The Board received only 2 nominees for NEWC Member of the Year. In previous years, we've received significantly more. There was a comment that it might be good to allow write-in candidates on the ballot. The Board discussed at length

- Possible causes:
  - form may be intimidating, e.g., requiring information most members don't have such as membership number
  - requirements may be too many and too restrictive—who except for a Board member or leader of a local club would know the required info about enough of the membership and their contributions to be able to select the potential nominees? Who can qualify who isn't on the Board?
  - discouragement on the part of people who've submitted names in the past and seen their candidates fail to be selected
- Possible next steps:
  - Cancel ballot?
  - Simplify form?
  - Get feedback on the awards process (nomination form/requirements, etc.) from the membership?

**\* BOARD DECISION** – The Board voted to proceed with the ballot for NEWC Member of the Year with the 2 nominations that were received. (6 in favor 1 opposed)

**\* ACTION ITEM:** Mary will submit draft ballots to Roger for review. The ballots will be included in the upcoming newsletter. The deadline date for return of the ballots is 5/1/2010.

Mary moved that a survey be conducted with each of the grass-root organizations and with any members who attend the October NEWC meeting on the procedure for selecting the NEWC Member of the Year.

**\* BOARD DECISION** – The Board agreed that a survey be conducted with each of the grass-root organizations and with any members who attend the October NEWC meeting, on the procedure for selecting the NEWC Member of the Year. (unanimously)

**\* ACTION ITEM:** Mary to draft a survey for review by the Board in time for distribution of the survey in September to the grass roots groups and for handing out at the October NEWC meeting.

There was a side track discussion on possible motivations to attend meetings or to skip them

- Star power – publicizing that there will be a well-known, popular guest speaker
- Free workshops/lessons
- Lack of lunch makes staying around after the morning session to hear the guest speaker less likely

### **Connect 2 Clubs**

Re: February email exchange concerning Connect 2 Clubs business proposal to revise the NEWC web site. Roger noted that this discussion was NOT opened because of any desire to replace Todd. He's doing a great job. And the opinions from the Board members indicate that we will not be following up on the offer from Connect 2. However, Robert Schmeichel's assessment of the Connect 2 offering raises important questions -- "What is NEWC?" "Who is the website for?"

Leo observed that NEWC should be a guild with local groups as members, an annual convention, and a major big show; but this is a big effort. The Board discussed whether we should be looking to improve our web site or should stay with Todd and the current site. Bob said that the while a significant fraction of the membership does not use computers or the web, people his age (40's, 50's) do use the web and the NEWC web site is a key way of reaching current and potential members. Karen agreed and said that younger generations also use technologies like blogs, Twitter, etc.

There are 2 aspects to evaluating the site:

- usability from a user interface point of view – can you find things easily? can you use the menus easily? etc.
- usefulness for a woodcarver – is the information you seek present? Is there information that is useful and interesting? Etc.

Bob proposed putting together a committee to determine what the web site is supposed to accomplish and its intended use. He offered to chair an adhoc committee later this year.

**\* BOARD DECISION** – The Board voted to form a committee of all NEWC members who wish to participate, to be chaired by Bob Landry. The charter of this committee will be to investigate what the NEWC web site should accomplish, its intended use, etc. The committee would begin work in the Fall of 2010 (unanimously).

### **June luncheon**

Roger proposed having a luncheon this year at the June meeting. It will have to be catered by the University.

**\* ACTION ITEM:** Roger to investigate the costs.

### **Calendar for 2011**

Roger needs to move forward on this in order to let MCC know and reserve the rooms. He plans to keep the same schedule we've been using, changing the dates as needed.

**The meeting adjourned at 12:35pm**

