

Senior College at Belfast Board Meeting Agenda

Wed, Nov 4, 2015 at 9:00 AM in Room 105

1. **Approve Minutes** of 10/7/15 Board Meeting (5)
2. **Treasurer's Report** – Rendle Jones (15)
3. **Committee Reports:** (5)

Speakers (Anne Dolbashian)

Publicity is going out for Seth's presentation Fri Nov 6 and things are on schedule. Alarik's presentation will be either December 4 or 5 (evening). Scott is requesting \$300 and a night's lodging in someone's guest room. Do I hear an avalanche of volunteers? I'll guarantee that he would be an interesting guest.

Community Services (Wendy Kasten & Marje Stickler)

In Oct 18-20 SC members participated in the *Neighbor 4 Neighbor* project headed by *Waldo Community Action Partners*. The members made 340+ phone calls to potential senior recipients of holiday food baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The co-chairs see this committee as potentially a clearinghouse to match volunteer opportunities in our region with SC members who seek meaningful community engagement. The goal of this committee for the year is to develop a website area that would list the wide array of volunteer needs in all the regions which members represent. We believe it would be highly beneficial to both agencies and SC members to have information readily available about community service needs. If permission is granted for such website space, we would create the copy for such a feature, and be responsible for quarterly updates of the information offered on the site.

Special Events (David Ruberti)

Feb 2016	Gilbert & Sullivan at the Grand Theater in Ellsworth
Early April	Capitol/State Museum in Augusta
May/June	Acadia ranger guided tours
April 28-May 15	Duck Hunter Shoots Angel at the Penobscot Theater in Bangor
Not yet scheduled	Belfast nature walk with Chloe Chun

Curriculum (Sharon Romanow) – no report

Archives (Shirley Jarvella) – no report

Old Business:

4. **Proposed revision of scholarship policy** – discussion, vote to approve (25) (Appendix A)
5. **Proposed policy on internal and external communications** – discussion, vote to approve, if time (30) (Appendix B)
6. **Report from ad hoc committee on financial status/concerns** (20)

New Business:

7. Website drop down menu – discussion, vote to approve. A hard copy will be handed out at the meeting. (10)
8. Agenda items for Dec 2 (5)

Appendix

A. *Please read the following and review the line of email comments/questions to prepare for discussion. It seems that a major question concerns the number of scholarships to be granted. In addition, at the Sept meeting, Sara proposed having people fill out a form (hard copy or on-line) that asks:*

- 1. Are you requesting a scholarship for membership, class, or both?*
- 2. Please briefly explain why you need this scholarship.*
- 3. How much of the requested amount can you afford to pay?*

Do you want to require something like this? This would be the criteria for granting scholarships.

Scholarships for Membership and Courses

Senior College welcomes persons who may not be able to join and attend the college due to limited funds by offering a number of scholarships. The SC web site will advertise the availability of scholarships. Ten annual membership scholarships and ten course scholarships each semester are available to those who consider themselves in need. A person is eligible for one course per semester. If all ten course scholarships aren't used by the week before the beginning of classes, then a person may be eligible for a second course scholarship. After a person has had four course scholarships in one year, that person will be put on a wait list for further requests, so as to allow a greater number of people to have access to scholarships.

The request for scholarships will be made to the Board President or her/his designee, who will keep track of the number of requests. Requests, which may be made by phone, by email, in writing, or in person, will be granted on a first come, first served basis. The Office Manager will maintain a file of scholarship recipients, which will be shared with the Registrar. The names of those who receive scholarships will be kept confidential by anyone who has access to the records for management purposes.

Scholarship funds will be drawn from the Rediker Fund until it is exhausted, at which time scholarships will continue without payment to SC.

Note: The Maine Association of Retirees provides membership fee refunds for its members who are currently receiving a pension check from the state as a teacher, school staff, or district/municipality employee.

B. Please read the following in preparation for discussion about the proposed policy. Ad hoc Communications Committee: Sara Shute, Chair, John Bettler, and Dave Boyer. Replace p. 29 of the Handbook with the following.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Internal website manager. (This is in addition to the "external," paid web manager.) Oversees the Senior College website, making sure the external web manager keeps

information and advertising complete, accurate, and up to date. This includes information about courses and special events, names of instructors, board members, committee chairs, etc., and includes making sure handbooks are up to date.

Not for inclusion in the Policy and Procedures: Graphic designer: Designs posters, postcards, etc. for the Curriculum Committee, Special Events Committee, the Festival of Arts Committee, Brown Bag lunches, and the Speakers' Committee. Note that these two jobs are currently done by Sara Shute. In future, the graphic design position can go unfilled; each committee can be responsible for its own posters.

2. E-news editor. Contacts committee chairs and board president each month to find out news and events, and sends out a monthly e-newsletter to the membership via MailChimp. Sends out broadcast emails to membership in accord with the Broadcast Email Policy (see below).

3. Public Relations. Places ads for courses in local papers, writes press releases concerning courses and special events*; puts events on community calendars, etc.

*Note that not all special events are open to non-members.

QUESTIONS: 1. Without having a "Communications Committee," how can we be assured that the Internal Website Manager, the E-news editor, and the PR person are communicating? Establish a chain of command, making one of them responsible? Trust to the intelligence and goodwill of the participants? Don't worry about it?

2. The PR person needs a budget; who will create it?

E-NEWS, CLASSROOM ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND BROADCAST E-MAILS POLICY

E-NEWS AND CLASSROOM ANNOUNCEMENTS: The purpose of the E-news and classroom announcements are to inform the Senior College membership of courses (in the case of the E-news), special events, speakers, etc. sponsored by Senior College.

A. Volunteer opportunities and other community events not sponsored by Senior College: The Community Service Committee may wish to advertise requests from the community for volunteers in the E-news, or via classroom announcements, according to its charge in the Senior College Handbook. However, all other requests for volunteers, for invitations to community events, or for donations to non-profit or community organizations (other than Senior College) are beyond the scope and purpose of the E-news and classroom announcements.

Rationale: Apart from notices from the Community Service Committee, other notices or ads of the need for community volunteers or events, etc., not sponsored by Senior College, have been placed in the E-news, or mentioned in classroom announcements, only because a particular member(s) wanted it so, and knew how to go about getting it done. This practice is both arbitrary and unfair. But the argument for any particular ad or announcement has been that the organization or event being publicized is not only a

worthy one, it would be good for Senior College members to get involved in volunteering or to attend some event. Our response is this:

First, if we are going to continue to permit certain members to advertise their favorite non-profits or special upcoming events not sponsored by Senior College, then this privilege has to be open to all members, and be known to be open to all members. Anything less is simply an arbitrary and unfair special privilege. But to open this up would surely result in a glut of ads and announcements. To avoid this, we should limit ads and announcements to those sponsored by Senior College.

Second, if it's a good argument that an organization or event should be advertised or announced because it's "worthy," and "good for" Senior College members to volunteer for or attend, then it would follow that any such organization or event should be advertised or announced in classes. But this is absurd: we can't begin to advertise or make announcements about all those organizations and events. And note that it wouldn't be limited to just organizations that need volunteers; membership organizations devoted to exercise, health, weight loss, animal welfare, handicrafts, reading, etc. can also be worthy, and certainly "good for" senior college members. There is no possible way to advertise all of these in addition to all the others.

B. Death notices: The E-news does not publish obituaries, but it will publish remembrances in the following form: In Memoriam: "Person's Name," 19__ - 20__."

Rationale: Occasionally people send in obituaries for Senior College members, while others send in simple "In Memoriam" notices (and of course other deaths are not mentioned at all). It seems fairest to decline all obituaries in favor of the simple form of recognition of the death of a Senior College member.

BROADCAST E-MAILS: The regular e-news goes out (usually) once a month. All other electronic broadcast messages will be kept to a minimum, and must be approved either by the President or the Website Manager (see p. 44 of the Privacy Policy)*. It is not expected that special events or speakers will be advertised electronically more often than in the regularly scheduled E-news. Exceptions are in cases where an event is seriously undersubscribed, where the E-news is sent out much earlier than the date of the event, where an event is scheduled after the E-news has been sent out, etc.

Rationale: We send out approximately 1100 E-news each month, and anyone can unsubscribe at any time. Approximately half of these recipients open what we send. (The highest percentage was when we sent the notice of fall classes, which got a 56% rate of opens.) The more we send, the less important each one is, and the more likely recipients are to ignore them, or unsubscribe. The policy above is in line with the Privacy Policy (pp. 44-5) the board passed last year, where the idea was to insure that the membership is not bombarded with emails from Senior College (by making the approval process more difficult than merely asking/telling the E-news editor to send something out).

*QUESTION: *If we want the Internal Website Manager to be one of the persons who approves these broadcast e-mails, the Privacy Policy will have to be changed (because it currently says approval must be sought from the President or the "Website Manager" rather than "Internal Website Manager"). Or, we could have the E-news editor make these decisions. But either way, we have to change the wording of the Privacy Policy.*