

**Senior College of Belfast Board Meeting
December 9, 2020 (via Zoom)**

Call to Order: President Nancy Perkins called the meeting to order at 9:32 AM. (Only David Greeley absent.)

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the November 11 meeting were accepted.

Approval Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's report was accepted.

Old Business:

1. Nancy Perkins requested that Elisabeth give her a list of those SC members who don't use email or electronic media, so that Nancy can send them postcards. Elisabeth agreed to provide this list and also furnish address labels.

2. Nancy welcomed Arlen Larsen, to discuss his presidency and about the Board, our By-laws and history.

Arlen said that the position of president of SC Belfast can be overwhelming, in part because the president is also the CEO, unlike most non-profits. The operations, policy, etc., are combined, adding up to governance. Legally this responsibility belongs to the entire board. Arlen talked about his own history in non-profits and boards, going back 50 years. Through his first several boards he was focused on programs, not on policy, by-laws or governance. On the WCAP board, he attended trainings, and learned a lot about legal responsibilities of boards.

Duty of Care: we are the caretakers of SC Belfast, its wellbeing and future. We have a duty to know and follow (and revise, update) the Bylaws, which are legally binding documents. SC Belfast began in 2001, now has a nearly 20-year history. 2020 brought a lot of change and disruption and adjustments to SC, and the governing documents will need to be re-read, considered and revised. It's extremely important for the whole board to know and understand the rules and regulations. Arlen himself had to spend time looking through our archives and looking up Best Practices for non-profit boards. He re-read the handbook recently and saw that there are problems and inconsistencies, and we need a thorough study, updating and revision. He asked for feedback from anyone who attended the recent training.

Jim Owen found the training very helpful. He (like many of us) came on the board supportive, but ignorant of Maine state laws governing non-profits, or of duties of care, loyalty, and obedience, and legal duty of confidentiality. As chair of the Nominating Committee, the Board training shifts his understanding of how to choose and recruit board members; we need to consider what skills we need, what we're missing.

Arlen repeated that the Handbook contains a lot that we (the board) need to become familiar with. There was some discussion about this. Elisabeth has the whole handbook as a word document (docx). She will send it out to the board, and we should all send any comments to her by the end of January 2021. When we meet in February, we'll all have the document. For now, the Maine Nonprofit Corporation act (78 pages long! RJ) will be attached to the minutes. Nancy would like to have Arlen back at that meeting, as a mentor / guide. Arlen left the meeting at 10:18.

3. Curriculum Committee: Deirdre's email to the board attached to the minutes, a paragraph summary, following the Treasurer's model. She read the report, noting that in addition to local support, we had a student attending a zoom class from California! Evaluations also show some issues with Zoom which we're addressing by assigning hosts to each class who can introduce how to use Zoom, as well as practice sessions before most classes. We can't control, e.g., if there's a power outage, or weak broadband coverage across the state -- which is a political issue, one we can all work

to influence at the ground level. Al reported that the FCC just allocated a couple of billion dollars to extend coverage in rural areas, including Maine. This will require satellites, which Elon Musk's Starlight company is developing. This is hopeful but will take time, and can't be done at a local level. It won't be free for the public. There was some discussion about this.

Deirdre also got in touch with Jim Duff, former director of the Brandywine Museum in Chadds Ford, PA. At this time he can't commit to giving a 6-week course; for one thing, he would need time to get permission for reproduction of images, etc. But he invited Deirdre to talk to him again in the summer of 2021. Online access to art museums (Google Art, e.g.) makes art accessible, and opens up possible future courses for SC. There was some discussion about this. Brenda brought up a Zoom event she'd attended hosted by Belfast Free Library featuring Dick Topping, who said he'd be doing a SC class in the spring.

4. SC Donation Fund/Grant Committee -- Ron Jarvella. Ron reported that WCAP (Waldo County Action Pgm) has met with the committee, and they agreed that any donation from us will be targeted to seniors (people over 50). This might include home heating, food, transportation, etc. Our \$10K has been met with a matching grant, bringing the total to \$15K which covers all the management fees charged. Brenda added that the committee agreed to work in collaboration with WCAP, the first meeting scheduled in January. There was a **MOTION** to accept Ron's proposal that we make the donation of \$10K to WCAP, for them to distribute, working with members of Ron's committee. There was discussion of this. Nancy brought up that we need the SCB community to understand why we're making this donation. Brenda said that the agreement will be put into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), to include dates. **MOTION was amended:** For \$10K to be granted to WCAP, provided that we get and approve the MOU. This passed unanimously.

5. Finance Committee -- Treasurer's Report (attached) -- The Finance Committee met yesterday, summarized in the Treasurer's Report, and discussed the rolling budget. Brenda reported that the fall course revenue exceeded the projection (projection was \$4,190, actual \$5,220, largely from Pete Reilly's class). Projected memberships for fall were 100, actual was 249 members. Her guestimate for winter course revenue is \$3,120, with 186 participants. So far, our actual registration includes 126 people registered, we're 2/3ds of the way there. Pete promotes Winterim courses to his large class, and there will be other advertising. Big classes bring in a lot of money. Al added "donation" to the registration form, and we've been getting donations of almost \$500, which we didn't budget for. It is clear we won't be going back to the Hutch in this fiscal year, so there is no cost for refreshments. Brenda went over the rest of the Treasurer's Report. We haven't yet used the scholarship funds this year. Nancy said Health classes have had low enrollment, where possible students might need scholarship help. Scholarships can be used for either classes or membership, or both. Elisabeth mentioned that we're not in the Heavenly Yarns paper; Helen has discontinued the Community Events feature. Jen from Spectrum Generations works through WCAP, & Deirdre will tell Jen about the scholarship funds. Nancy will mention it to Aging Well in Waldo County. Brenda went over the rest of the Treasurer's Report. Current projections show a loss of \$1,800, but that could easily turn around through more course revenue. Finance Committee recommended that the proposed budget be accepted by the board as a whole. This was moved and seconded, and passed.

6. Special Events: Martha -- There are fifty people planning to go to the Special Events planetarium event.

7. Nominating Committee -- Jim Owen. Nominating committee doesn't really get going until Spring. Jim will send email of comments & questions to the board soon. (Attached)

Motion to adjourn passed. Adjourned at 11:10 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Jessup

ADDENDUM 1:

Wed, Dec 9, 9:29 AM (4 days ago)

Email from: Deirdre Good

Report for the Board from the CC

60 attendees came to the online Winter Wonderland session introducing Winterim 2020-2021 courses. Enrollment for these courses is already very good. Our instructors also receive great evaluations: of one recent course a participant said that it exceeded expectations because the subject turned out to be more interesting than the participant had thought it would be. Moreover, "the instructor's enthusiasm and in-depth knowledge made me look forward to being up and awake enough to attend class at 7.00am CA time. (That is no small feat!)." Issues with Zoom and online participation are helped by assigning hosts to each class. As for reliability, we can still hope for better broadband coverage across the state. In the meantime, we are working on a great roster of Spring 2021 courses.

Peace,
Deirdre

ADDENDUM 2:

Dec 9, 2020, 3:33 PM (4 days ago)

Email from Jim Owen

I appreciate your willingness to accept an email from me, rather than trying to squeeze me in at the end of a long and productive meeting. Thank you. I have trouble focusing and sitting still during zoom meetings lasting much longer than an hour.

As I said briefly, I thought the Board Member training offered by the Maine Association of Nonprofits was very well done, and thought-provoking. I would sign up for another without hesitation, and would pay my own way to do it. I have notes on the whole session, but right now I just want to share my reactions to what was relevant to board membership, committee membership, and the nominating committee.

- Instead of selecting volunteers for Board or Committee Membership based on who we know, who our friends know, or on "any warm body willing to volunteer" we should be looking for volunteers with specific skills, specific previous experience, and on who provide diversity, balance, and reflect the membership of Senior College.

- As youthful (under 50) spouses or partners of College members are also eligible for membership and taking our classes, we should develop a strategy for not just reaching out to them to sign up for classes, but to also take on volunteer roles. It could be a chance to train the next generation of faculty and leaders.

- I think the Board and the Nominating Committee need to know the following on a regular basis:

- What skills or experience exist on the current Board? (It would be good to have a list)

- What would an "ideal" Senior College Board look like? 4 members who know SC history? Several faculty members? 2 folks with accounting experience? 2 folks with previous educational leadership experience? Somebody with Marketing experience? with Office Management skills? A lawyer? A healthcare provider with training in "Geriatric" medicine/public health? An administrator/manager in a Waldo County assisted living facility? Somebody from the local Library? Somebody from a local service organization, like the Shriners or Elks, Somebody from the local hospital? Somebody from the Hutchinson Center? Others? (obviously some folks would likely have more than one area of expertise or experience)

- What skills or experiences are missing from the current Board membership? (It would be good to have a list of this too)

- Which Board members, Committee chairs are likely to leave in the next year, next two years? What skills, experiences will the Board lose?

- How can we recruit volunteers with the skills or experience we need? (Such as volunteer-vacancy listings in our newsletter? A separate section of the website specifically outlining the principles of Board Membership? Lunch and Learn workshops? Personal outreach by Board members and members of the Nominating Committee? Others?)

Please think about this with me. I am considering emailing again or using a survey app in January to get at who we are and who we need. Does that make sense to you? Too intrusive or much needed? Comments? From what I understand the Nominating Committee in the past has largely been active in the Spring: asking folks to do another term, recruiting and meeting together trying to come up with a slate of new officers and committee chairs..Starting sooner might be less stressful for everybody.... Warmly, Jim

--

Jim Owen

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