

Senior College of Belfast Board Meeting
September 8, 2021 (via Zoom)

Call to Order: President Nancy Perkins called the meeting to order at 9:33 AM.

Present: Nancy Perkins, Beth Sterner, Al Arthur, Jim Owen, Rebecca Jessup, Brenda Smith, Martha Laitin, Elisabeth Pollock, David Greeley, Ron Jarvella, Deirdre Good.

Absent: John Economy,

Observers, prospective members: Bob Adler, Mayo Bullock, Richard Koralek, Doug Chamberlin, Brian Richardson, Marjorie Arnett.

Since three future board members were there to observe, Nancy asked that we all go around and introduce ourselves, including prospective members, which was done. Due to technical difficulties, Elisabeth Pollock couldn't be heard and dropped out of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

Brenda had a correction: the name of our accountant is Mike Nickerson, not John Nickerson. With that correction, the minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report:

- Brenda went over the report. We finally did get statements from the University of Maine Foundation where we have four accounts, one large endowment account to support our work at the Hutchinson Center, which is part of UM. There are a couple of restricted accounts, and one quasi-restricted account, made up of accumulated profits from past years. The UM Foundation is slow to get us reports, but as of June we had an unrealized gain of \$20K. Brenda has been granted permission to access the UM Foundation's data base, so she can check balances on our accounts.
- Registration for fall opened late August, and as of the end of August we had gotten a little over \$1K in course revenues, as of Sept 4, we had 54 registrants. Course Storm holds the money in escrow until class start-date, so once classes start the revenue will come in.
- Accountant's bills were being sent to the Hutch, not to us. We have just paid \$1300 for the preparation of our tax return, plus \$700 for four months of accounting fees.
- Our CDs renew on October 17, and Brenda hopes to have a Finance Committee meeting before that. She wants to cash out one CD, as revenue projections show we may lose money during the fall semester. Pete Reilly set up a CD ladder, scheduled to mature over time, but now all five CDs renew on Oct 17. Brenda wants to set them back up as a ladder.
- Because of unpredictability of the pandemic, we have not been able to create an annual budget since March of 2020. Since we went to Zoom-only classes we lost several instructors. See Fall 2021 Course Revenue Projection XL spreadsheet which was sent out along with Financial statements for July and August, as well as the Treasurer's Report for August 2021. Brenda expressed concern for low revenues unless there's a push. Nancy reported that a press release has gone out to the Chamber newsletter and in Our Town Belfast, and other promotions are going out. There is some Zoom fatigue, but Nancy's own class is completely full. She urged us all to reach out to people we know to take a course. Compared to other SCs around the state, we're the real bargain this year at \$20 a class. Beth was concerned that \$20 is too low, as people might be willing to sign up and blow the class off. Memberships are also due and have been mentioned in every email blast to members. Al Arthur reports that 66 new members have signed up, for income of \$1500. Nancy said that we were caught short by the last-minute decision to go with only Zoom classes. We'll make up for the weak Fall Semester in Winterim when we go back to our full price classes. We could go to a 6-week Winterim session rather than four. Jim Owen agrees that we should bring prices back up to \$35 in any case. We dropped the price when we first went to Zoom-

only classes, hoping to entice students. That was successful. There was some discussion about the decision to lower prices, and the failure to raise them again for this Fall semester. This was exacerbated by the necessary learning curve for Course Storm, which is new to us. In future the Treasurer (Brenda) will check over anything that is posted before it goes up. The issue is not really with Course Storm.

Old Business:

Nancy asked Ron Jarvella for an update from Waldo CAP, adding that they've just bought some land and will be building. Ron reports for prospective board members on our \$10K grant to WCAP (Waldo County Action Partners), which stipulated how the money could be used and how WCAP should report to us. Since then WCAP's leadership has changed; Donna Kelly is now Executive Director. She reports that they are working on two projects: to get large-print books available in the library, and to aid the YMCA's distribution of books to the homebound. He asked Donna for the quarterly statements that were stipulated in the grant. Nancy mentioned that there were to be two meetings, one in Belfast and the other at the county, but because of crossed signals, neither Nancy nor Deirdre went. Beth went, and she corrected the record saying that Donna's position at WCAP has not changed, but Dorothy Havey left and went to the Belfast Chamber of Commerce. Brenda said that by the end of September they will owe us two quarterly reports. Nancy will write them a letter about this.

Handbook update: Elisabeth Pollock was going to make copies of the handbook and pass them out, but she had to leave early due to bad internet connection. The handbook is accessible through the website. <https://belfastseniorcollege.org/senior-college-handbook/> Hard copies will be made available to the board.

Committee Reports:

Curriculum Committee: Deirdre Good pointed out the spreadsheet that Al put up showing all information about fall classes. There are 11 classes, two free as they're brown bag lunches. Enrolment ranges from 4 in one class to 31 in another. There was discussion about how to increase enrollment and what classes seem most popular. Deirdre sent five classes to be posted on the Maine SC network. (This spreadsheet is available to all board members. It has been in use for each semester for over a year.)

Nancy said that all other SCs around the state are also experiencing lower enrollments. Deirdre said that each semester we have new instructors, and each one has a host who coordinates technical aspects of the class before it starts and throughout. The hosts are identified on the spreadsheet.

Materials: Where a class requires materials (e.g. art classes) the cost can be added to the price of the class through Course Storm, to be paid at time of registration. There was discussion of lining up future classes, e.g. for Winterim. There are some past instructors who refuse to teach by Zoom, but Deirdre is encouraging anyone open to it to learn to use Zoom. The host position is to make the transition easier. There was some discussion of (imaginative) possible and current courses, and the need to come up with new ideas.

*Nominating Committee: Jim Owen reported the good news that we'll have 15 board members, which is what we should have. Jim learned from Elisabeth Pollock that members who are renewing (Al Arthur, Ron Jarvella, and Nancy Perkins) need to be affirmed by the membership, and the two who are going to do three-year terms (Marjorie Arnett and Mayo Bulloch) need to be affirmed. Those who are filling out the terms of people who left early (Richard Koralek, Robert Adler, Doug Chamberlin and Brian Richardson) do not have to be voted on, because they are appointed rather than elected. (Whether the latter are already board members is not clear in the handbook, but in general a new board starts after the annual meeting.)

SC Members at the annual meeting will need a slate to vote on, and a list of the new board.

New Business:

Annual Meeting is September 30th, by Zoom. Al reported that the link already exists and some people have signed up. The link will be sent again the day before or the 30th. (*Nominating Committee chair Jim Owen reports at this point.)

Orientation of New Board Members Martha Laitin added to her email of Sept 9, other Committee Chairs to explain their tasks: Tech Committee, Beth; Special Events, Martha; Financial Committee, Brenda. Ron agreed to speak about the history of SCB. She asked members to choose which Fridays (10/1 or 10/8) would work for them. The date was settled as Friday October 1 at 9AM. Beth suggested that the meeting be recorded for anyone who can't attend. Nancy agreed that the meeting will be recorded and sent to everyone.

Appreciation Members who will not be staying on include David Greeley, Jim Tabor, John Economy and Elisabeth Pollock -- David being the only one present. All have been and will continue to be valuable members of Senior College whose contributions past and present are greatly appreciated.

After the brief annual meeting, the board will convene to re-elect the officers. If anyone would like to take over as President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer, he or she can step up at that time.

The Corona Chronicle is continuing to come out, and if anyone has anything to contribute (essay, poem, book or movie or music/theatre review, artwork) please send it to Nancy or to Janet Williams. Arlin is compiling the first edition of the Chronicle, the first year, and he wants a cover for it, so we need a volunteer with artistic or graphic design ability. Brenda suggested Audrey Devaney, and also mentioned that Course Storm includes a field about what abilities / interests members have, and there are members who have expressed willingness to serve on the board, teach, etc. Al said that anyone who is an administrator in Course Storm can access that. Brenda said a report on just that field could also be distributed periodically. Jim said that he's learned that the sooner we can start recruiting for next year's board, the better, so that information would be valuable.

New board members were encouraged to think about what committee(s) they'd like to serve on. Nancy mentioned that the Publicity Committee has been totally inactive for some time.

The Maine State Association is suggesting *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson for all to read followed by some combined courses on climate change. Nancy added that anyone can join her to come to the State Association at 12:30 on Wednesdays.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Jessup,
Secretary