

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2004
At the Walsh's home in Natick

Present: Peggy Andreas, Peter Bloch, Julie Osherson, Andrew Mason, Darcy Smith, Ann Acheson, Betsy Stout, Carol Costello, Micki Friedman, Meg Connor

Policy on sales of artwork at the coffeehouse - Peter presented the following draft:

“The Executive Committee is aware that many Northfielders are interested in purchasing products that might be offered by members of the community who have an artistic inclination. Historically the policy has been that such transactions have been prohibited during the week of the Conference. Nevertheless, in recent years a small underground economy has developed, fueled by purchases by individual buyers of photos, paintings, craftwork and CDs. Last year, sales of arts and craft objects were allowed only at the Coffee House. That was moderately successful, and no one complained. But it excluded some (musicians with CDs for example). And there is some concern that these sales may draw money away from the Silent Auction (and thereby from fundraising efforts of our conference).

So the EC is proposing the following policy on a one-year trial basis:

1. Community members who make objects themselves that are expressive art forms may sell those objects at the Northfield Conference
2. Transactions will take place solely between the seller and buyer; the Northfield Conference is not sponsoring or organizing such sales (although such work may be exhibited at events such as the Coffee House);
3. Sellers will agree to donate to the Conference at least 20% of what they receive;
4. Sellers are also encouraged to donate examples of their works to the Silent Auction”

Discussion ensued about the distinction between products and services and it was agreed the policy should be limited to products. All agreed to the policy, with the consensus to do it on a trial basis for one year. It was decided to include opportunities for feedback on this policy in the regular NF evaluations. (**DARCY and ANN**) will include the policy in the egroup, registration packet and grapevine (**PETER**)

Grapevine- Current issue is late, which has been an ongoing concern since Lisa has taken on the editing position. **PETER** will talk with Lisa about considering other ways she can contribute her talents to the conference and will seek a new editor.

Sam and Toby have created a NF chronology of last year's conference that will be included in the grapevine and on the NF website (with photos) as a promotion piece.

Sexual Harassment Insurance- NMH has a new policy that any groups using the NMH facilities for a week or longer must carry a Sexual Harassment Insurance policy. Andrew has *extensively* researched sources of this type of policy and could only find one insurance company that would provide such insurance for our conference, but it would require our conference to do background police checks on all our children's program staff. This would be extremely difficult for us, considering we have Canadian staff etc. Andrew has had conversations with NMH and has been negotiating that NMH would be backup liability for our Conference since originally NMH was the sponsor for our conference. He will follow-up with NMH to make this official.

PEGGY and RON will be designing a training for all Children's Program Staff prior to the conference Andrew estimates that our liability insurance will probably only increase by about \$60. this year (Last year was \$345.)

Finances- Ron informed that Graceanna has declined the token raise that we have offered her. He points out that the Conference needs a permanent address in order for potential donors to bequeath a donation to the Conference in their will. Peggy read \$3200 in budget line for room and board for resource people for this year's conference. We could have as much of a 40% DECREASE for children. Kim has agreed to be on staff. As of this date, Holly will not be able to attend the Conference this year.

The Midwinter conference- contract with Rolling Ridge for 2005 has been signed. The weekend of the Martin Luther King Birthday Weekend is being held for us, but we can still decide what portion of that weekend we actually want to be there.

Peter announced that there is the possibility of joint mid-winter retreat with the Mid-Atlantic conference, or inviting its representatives to our Midwinter. Peter suggested a small committee begin to look at how we want to use that Midwinter time, and how to work with the other League members, not waiting to September which is when they usually meet.. Steve and Peggy have volunteered to help with that discussion. Northern Area League: **STEVE** agreed to be the point person for this ad hoc committee and will ask Carolyn, Maeve, Micki and Connie to see if they want to be part of this committee since they have been so involved with the League. This committee will present a report at the annual conference during the Community Meeting.

Registration Packet- Graceanna has asked that it be printed, collated, folded, stamped, labeled and sent out in the mail by April 1. (**DARCY and ANN**) Linen costs have gone up by \$10. **DARCY and ANN** will email the registration form to Meg to keep on the secretary's laptop so that it doesn't need to be recreated each year. **PEGGY** will contact Graceanna to get final figures on registration and tuition charges and will let Darcy and Ann know. She will also let know about the insurance cost increase.

CONNIE needs to send the names and addresses from Midwinter attendees to Graceanna, Frank Grillo, Darcy and Ann so that the master mailing list with new attendees.

May meeting at NMH Campus- **PEGGY** will contact Tom Pratt, Rafaella, Kip and Betty Stuckey to see if they can meet with us on one of the following dates:

Fri, May 14

Thurs, May 13

Wed, May 19

and will let the following people know: Graceanna, Peter, Julie, Darcy, Ann, Andrew and Meg.

NMH Campus Closing- With NMH's announcement of the closing of their NF campus, the EC has, in line with their charge to create sub-committees as needed, appointed Andrew Mason and Betsy Stout to head up a committee to explore the potential loss and relocation of our conference site. **Andrew and Betsy** have agreed. A discussion ensued about the role and responsibilities of this committee.

Darcy and Ann, in their program planning, had designed a survey to elicit concerns and visions for the future of the conference that they passed out. Andrew asked for clarification of the Committee's charge. It was decided to begin by naming known facts as of today:

As of 2 wks ago the NMH faculty and staff got notices of whose contracts were going to be eliminated for 2004-2005.

Tom Pratt told Andrew that our conference space is reserved thru June 2005. That same week he was notifying *other* programs that were planning on this summer that we couldn't be there *this* summer.

The school is entertaining numerous options for the use of the campus in the future. It is looking into using the Northfield Campus as strictly a conference center in the future.

Articles have appeared in newspapers containing some information about NMH's plans.

It was decided that an article needs to go out to the community in the next grapevine updating everyone what steps the EC is taking, including the creation of this committee whose responsibility is facilitation of the process of finding a new conference location, should this be necessary. **(PETER?)**

Relocation Committee – (ANDREW/BETSY) to meet with EC in advance of the walkthrough mtg at NMH in May to communicate to EC their thoughts about their needs for adding other committee members, establish a list of tasks, their thoughts about strategy and timeline creating various tracks based on possible information, Also to complete the following

tasks:

-to get list of criterion that Emily Mitchell generated from participants at Mid-Winter.

-to communicate with DARCY/ANN any scheduling needs for the summer conference beyond a Wednesday afternoon Community meeting.

It was decided the following needs to be communicated to the NMH administration:

- the importance to our community in knowing in advance of this year's conference if this will be our last conference on the NMH campus.

-Our conference's historical relationship with the school, and its origins in the schools mission

-Our conference needs to be given the widest range of possible options from the NMH administration that NMH can offer us to consider for our future

Conference Preparations- Peter, Peggy, and Julie stayed on to meet with Darcy and Ann to review tasks still needing to be delegated for the June Conference.

Meeting was adjourned. Next EC Mtg to be held at NMH campus prior to May Walk-through mtg; Peggy to inform us of date.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Connor