

**Governing Board Meeting Minutes**  
**August 14, 2021 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM CST**  
**Zoom**

*Attendance:*

*Board members:* Linda Nutt, JoEL LoGiudice, Maggie Fansher, Reneau Dubberley, Pat Moody, Roberta Bell, Synthia Clark, Audrey Deal-McEver, Candace Gooch-Ward, Kelly Hider, Wansoo Kim, Vincent Lillegard, Wisty Pender, Christi Teasley, Paige Ward, Pat Chaffee, Cynthia Gadsen

*Absent:* Sally Bebawy, Jessica Hagar, Shaun Giles

*Staff members:* Kim Waag

**Approval of June 2021 Minutes**

All in favor.

**President's Report**

Linda directs board members to her report, and acknowledges the progress made by both the Community Engagement and eCommerce committees. While these committees do not have a dedicated time in the agenda, she encourages board members to ask questions of the committee chairs.

The Executive Committee has met to discuss, and subsequently approve, Kim's proposed staffing plan. More to come in the executive director's report.

Sadly, Cara Young has had to resign from the board. Linda thanks Cara for all her work, and reminds the group that Cara agreed to serve on the board for an additional year past her original year given the pandemic situation and the leadership transition.

**Executive Director's Report**

Kim remarks what a change a year can make. August 2021 stands in contrast to August 2020, with organizational focus shifting from pivoting programming in response to the needs of the community and finding new funding sources to being in a financially stable position and thoughtfully reinstating and/or reimagining programming opportunities.

Tennessee Craft realized a net income of seventeen thousand in 2019, whereas in 2020, there was a net loss of fifty-five thousand. Even with a decrease in earned income (from the lack of in-person fairs) and a decrease in memberships, the current fiscal year ends with ten thousand net income. Kim is proud of our efforts to keep the organization solvent through these trying times.

Speaking to the upcoming fall fair, Kim mentions that there are no health mandates from Metro Nashville Health currently, but Tennessee Craft might put protocols in place for the event (Kids Tent protocols, masks will be available, and social distancing encouraged). Preparations for the fair proceed as normal, sponsorships are being secured, and Kim will keep the board apprised to any changes in health protocols.

The Best of Tennessee Craft exhibition opens this October at the Tennessee State Museum. Kim, Bonnie and Julia have had a great experience working with the staff at the state museum. All board members will receive an invitation to the Collectors Circle, a fundraising initiative supporting the exhibition giving patrons recognition at the exhibition, early access to the opening reception where jurors and curators will speak and present awards, and access to the closing reception to honor award winners (hosted at Gruhn Guitars). In partnership with the education department at the museum, Tennessee Craft will be able to offer demonstrations, themed monthly events, and more robust children's programming inspired by the exhibition.

In January, Tennessee Craft will host a professional development workshop at Arrowmont. Kim thanks Kelly and her committee for all their work on the event thus far. Chan Dillon, who owns W.C. Dillon Insurance, will sponsor the lunch and learn series following the workshop.

Kim will visit the Northeast Chapter in a few weeks, and will share information about the workshop series and other Tennessee Craft initiatives.

Progress on Shop Tennessee Craft continues. Staff and the executive committee support the engagement of a marketing consultant to focus on the program's launch and to establish a yearly communications schedule for the staff to maintain post the launch period. To date, Tennessee Craft has raised over \$33,500 to cover the initial development costs of \$38,500.

In the coming month, Tennessee Craft staff will focus on the annual report, by collecting year-end statistics and preparing materials for the annual audit.

The Tennessee Arts Commission just deposited the first grant payment for the MAAP and operating grant. Linda asks if these government grants are matching grants? Kim says yes, but some grant matches have been decreased this year due to Covid-19.

### **End of Fiscal Year 2021 Treasurer Report**

Reneau presents the financial reports. Beginning with the statement of financial position, he summarizes that the organization is in good financial shape, which is impressive given all the unexpected factors of the past fiscal year. The bank account rests at ninety thousand dollars, and total assets show a positive five thousand, but includes chapter income which is not income for the organization at large. Earned income decreased fifty thousand dollars from 2020, primarily due to the loss of a fall fair.

The PPE loan is still seen as a liability, and counts negatively to the net income. Once the loan is forgiven, these monies will no longer be a liability to the organization.

Reneau moves on to the statement of activities, and focuses on the report without chapter numbers. Income is on budget and expenses are down 50%, due to cancelling the in-person fall fair. Given the socially distanced layout and weather, the Spring 2021 Fair was a loss of funds.

ECommerce start-up costs are an unexpected expense, but the majority has been covered with raised funds. Reneau expects additional marketing expenses in order to raise awareness for the new program. Even with this additional expenses category, Tennessee Craft controlled overall expenses to remain within the budget.

Overall, Tennessee Craft realized a net income of \$5,758 for the fiscal year. This gives the organization an opportunity to apply for grants with the narrative of stable fiscal management given the rocky circumstances.

Linda thanks Kim and the staff for keeping such close scrutiny on expenses. She comments that Reneau and the finance committee have been, and will continue to be, diligent about reviewing finances.

*JoEl moves to approve the financial report as presented, Wisty seconds. All in favor.*

### **Current & Future Development Activities**

Linda mentions that while the development committee remains busy, the group is nowhere near as busy as Bonnie. Linda summarizes Bonnie's report to the board, and begins with a brief overview of development metrics year over year in accordance with the strategic plan. She mentions the following as key components of the report:

- Increase in the number of individual gifts and major donors, however both increases, attributed to Shop Tennessee Craft donations.
- Shop Tennessee Craft is almost completely funded. Linda encourages board members to reach out to their communities to give to the project.
- Foundation funding increased throughout the pandemic.
- Corporate sponsorship has seen a 50% reduction, primarily situational due to pandemic (landlord gave break on rent/in-kind gift).
- Membership is down 60 people compared to last year.
- Donor retention rate increased by 5%.
- 134 unique household donors.

Linda acknowledges that having a dedicated fundraising staff member has allowed the organization to establish new ways for donors to engage with us. In particular, the Collector's Circle for the Best of Tennessee Craft Exhibit at the Tennessee State Museum is an exclusive way for donors to interact with jurors and artists at the opening and closing receptions. To participate in this special appeal, donors are asked to contribute \$250 per couple. Linda will ask Bonnie to send an email version of BOTC Collectors Circle invitation to board members for distribution among personal networks.

Linda thanks the development committee for their work brainstorming outreach initiatives and increasing the organization's circle of friends. She asks board members for their continued help to expand the number of people who support us.

**Break - Return at 11am.**

### **Executive Committee (EC) Recommendations – ED's performance recommendations**

When the Executive Committee performed the Executive Director's 6 month evaluation, the group asked for the following:

1. Include cost of health insurance for staff in budget,
2. Include in budget a 2% bonus pay (as warranted) based on staff base payroll,
3. Submit written plan to EC of how the ED can increase focus on ED efficiency (with budget, timeline, and other staff considerations included)

4. Develop a marketing plan that amplifies the benefits of Shop TN Craft. (Cash reserves committed to this project, the EC is unanimous in support for promoting the site), to be presented at a later time.
  - a. • ED's recommendations for addressing items 3 and 4 – the EC's response and recommendations

The Executive Committee has approved her response to the evaluation, and her subsequent proposal on increasing organizational efficiency.

To address the first consideration, Kim mentions that she has had a meeting with Chan Dillon, regarding health insurance. She has a contact to approach to further investigate health insurance options for the organization.

Kim reminds the board of the staff restructuring that took place when she was hired. There are currently three directors (executive, development (people who support us), and communications (working with the people we are serving)), but the organization is still under staffed, as the staff lines went from four to three in the transition. If programming had stayed stagnant, this restructuring would be adequate to continue operations, but given new initiatives (primarily STC and Community Engagement), the organization needs more staff time.

How to build capacity, when we have limited resources? Kim presents the NEA American Rescue Plan grant, a nation-wide, highly competitive grant helping arts organizations continue pre-pandemic activities by funding day-to-day and core mission functions / administrative assistance. With 3000 applications, and around 800 awards, this operating grant would be an opportunity to bring in additional staff support in the form of an administrative assistant.

Kim has submitted a letter of intent, and has been invited to submit a second application due by September 2nd. She will apply for a two year, fifty thousand dollar support grant starting January 2022 and running to December 2023. Kim allocated responsibilities to the new position (see supporting documents), and the position is not leading/managing/directing but assisting across the programmatic season. Advertised salary would be \$38,000 base pay annual, for a full-time position. Directors are currently in charge of all administrative tasks within their departments, and this position would free up much of the directors' time. In an ideal scenario, the organization would hire a new fair director or programs manager, but this position is not eligible given the grant guidelines, and would require a higher salary.

This is a reimbursement grant, and Kim is aware of the record keeping requirements, as the organization already receives federal grants. Record keeping systems are in place. If the grant is awarded, the new position would be sustainable for 16 months, after which the board would need to decide what to do. Hopefully with directors' time freed of administrative tasks, additional funding sources could be secured. If the grant is not awarded, the board would need to reconvene to determine next steps.

Kelly congratulates Kim on a creative way to get funding for a new staff position. Kim has attended many Q&A sessions on this grant, and she thinks the current Tennessee Craft application is very strong. This new position would assist all three existing staff positions.

Wisty congratulates Kim on the extensive grants schedule, and brings the board's attention to how much work goes into each component of the schedule.

TC received a six thousand dollar subgrant from American Rescue Plan via the Tennessee Arts Commission for supplies and operating costs.

*Wisty moves to move forward with the application of the NEA grant for staff support by September 2nd, with notification in December, and Kelly seconds. Wisty comments that the person being hired is made aware of the funding of the position. Audry comments on the hiring shortage, and that salary might be too low. Wisty asks if the position could be virtual? Kim says that there are in-office tasks, but a large percentage can be virtual. Kim can revisit the job description pending the hiring process. Wisty mentions that this could be an opportunity to hire from a different region of our state. Synthia mentions that a virtual position might make the grant more appealing. She mentions that travel costs/etc. needs to be mentioned upfront. Wisty comments on co-working spaces, and specifies the need to determine broadband coverage requirements. All in favor.*

Linda asks the board to revisit the topic once the grant announcement is made, and to strategize about how to pay for the position once the grant award runs out.

### **Board Commitments**

Linda reviews a variety of board leadership components:

- *Referrals*: She asks board members to submit board, donor and corporate sponsor prospects via the referral sheet in the board portal. In the immediate time frame, Bonnie is looking for board members to send corporate contacts, at any level within the organization, as having a personal connection makes for a more robust conversation.
- *Contact information*: The organization needs prompt responses. Linda typically sends texts and emails, and asks all board members to review (and update if necessary) their contact information and preferences located on the board portal.
- *Thank You Calls*: One half of the board has never made a thank you call. She asks that every board member makes an effort to make a few calls a month. The *Thank You Calls* spreadsheet is located on the Board Drive.
  - If you'd like Bonnie to send you a call list, we can ask her, but this takes time!
  - Reneau asks for an email reminder with the link. This would be helpful!
  - Kim mentions that the *Thank You Calls* spreadsheet is located as a quick link on the board portal.
  - Wisty mentions that the spreadsheet can be bookmarked, and asks for automated reminder emails to be sent on an off week.
- *Board Meetings 2022*: Dates for next year's meetings at the bottom of the agenda. Location survey got 14 responses, and Linda mentions that the survey was each board member's opportunity to engage in the discussion.

### **Consent Agenda: Chapter and Committee Reports & Presentations**

JoEL comments that the Community Engagement Committee has been extremely active since the last board meeting. She asks that the board continue to look at the board portal for resources that need input, particularly the referrals spreadsheet. Full board participation is needed to populate this information, and she calls on chapter reps to spread the word, particularly in the Memphis area.

Audry mentions that all these forms don't work if they aren't filled out!

*Reneau moves to accept the consent agenda, and JoEl seconds. All in favor.*

### **Meeting Schedule calendar year 2022**

Given the consensus via survey results and through follow-up communications with Linda, meeting dates and locations for 2022 are as follows:

November 13, 2021 – “Annual Open Meeting” virtual

Feb 5 + 6, 2022 Retreat – out of town – in person

June 11, 2022 Nashville – in person

August 13, 2022 – virtual

November 5, 2022 - virtual

### **Meeting locations survey results**

Kim summarizes the survey results for the board. There is overwhelming support for moving the in-person meetings around the state.

As gathered from the survey, the executive committee recommends the following: two in-person meetings (roaming retreat in February (business+retreat) and Nashville June business meeting) and two-virtual meetings (August and November, open-to-the-public) over the course of a year.

The in-person June meeting is timely given the annual budget review. If we move this recommendation, it could be a benefit for board recruitment.

Synthia comments that the board portal marks the August meeting as the open meeting. Linda remarks that the notice to members did not go out in time, thus this year the open meeting will be in November. Synthia remarks that this might be a better moment given the membership calendar. Synthia encourages the group to track attendance this November, and then the board can vote to change/keep the open meeting in August.

### **Nomination Committee**

Linda remarks that there will be a couple vacancies on the board for the upcoming calendar year. The executive committee has voted to retain a vacant board position for the upcoming year. Linda will spearhead the nominations committee, and asks for board members to send her recommendations. She asks for these recommendations quickly as the board will need to vote at the November meeting, for membership approval in December.

### **Other Business**

Pat encourages board members to volunteer for the fall fair. Kim adds that she will be sending an email for welcome tent captain sign-ups.

Linda leaves the meeting due to computer issues.

JoEL adds that Community Engagement teams will be reaching out to board members with a variety of requests. For example, Christi is working on collecting research leads:

- Suggestions on topics/peoples academic or otherwise with interest in helping to author TN Craft history essay.

- Recommendations on house museums with items as jumping off points for critical craft discussion.
- Funding opportunities for underrepresented artists, contemporary + historical

Christi and her subcommittee, is working on a resource spreadsheet to catalog and identify people.

Wisty suggests marketing this as a 'white paper' to gather interest.

Alice Merritt and Teri Alea are currently working on the history of Tennessee Craft

Roberta asks for JoEl to summarize Community Engagement committee's initiatives and requests via email for chapter distribution.

Motion to adjourn, Wisty, Reneau. All in favor. 12:23pm.

Minutes prepared by Maggie Fansher, Board Secretary

*Linda M. Nott*

