

October 5, 2015 meeting

Members in attendance: Becky, Lisa, Julie, Dagmar, Allison, Alanna

Meeting was called to order with Becky, Lisa, Allison, Dagmar, and Julie in attendance.

The minutes for the last meeting were unanimously accepted.

New business was mentioned first, with the idea being forwarded that we consider a new community college rep on the board, which all agreed was a great idea.

Board members then brainstormed some ideas for things to be included on the website for the 2016 SCWCA Regional Conference. Some ideas included information related to transportation, campus directions and map.

Online registration was discussed, with PayPal being a possibility. Allison will explore the possibility of PayPal or bank sponsored credit card account with the particulars being sorted out and discussed in the future.

Julie asked if checks would still be accepted, and Allison noted that credit card payments have always been slim. The vast majority of participants have used checks. Becky agreed that all options should continue to be available, while Lisa noted reminded everyone about credit cards not being accepted at last year's conference, which caused issues for those who did not realize it would be a problem.

Allison recommended that cash payments not be acceptable, as that often causes problems with student workers not being allowed to handle cash.

The issue of multiple membership lists was also debated. This is a very labor-intensive process, so Becky proposed a membership place being set up on the website. The use of the online form would make the collection and sorting of the information much easier, particularly for the vice president and the regional reps.

In the past, Allison noted, the list of conference attendees was considered the membership list. The idea of using this list, as well as the discussion list, could be merged into the membership list somehow.

Becky noted that using the registration information as the membership list, however, could cause some issues as some people cannot attend every year. We would not want them eliminated, so reconciling could be difficult. Allison suggested using the list-serv as a membership list, while Lisa and Becky noted that a lack of participation on that could cause the same sort of problem that inconsistent conference attendance could cause: someone being eliminated who shouldn't.

(Alanna joined the meeting during this conversation)

Becky continued with the idea that allowing members to join SCWCA via the website was where the group was leading, which Alanna agreed, stating that membership should be an intentional act.

Allison suggested comparing our membership list to the writing center list-serv/membership lists. The idea that some people prefer participation in the international organization was discussed, with all being in agreement that regional participation is vital and we should act as a group to encourage others to join/participate.

Julie elaborated on the reasons why some directors still may not be participating at the regional level, including funding and time issues.

Allison expressed a great deal of concern that, starting in the Spring, she will be the only Arkansas rep, and when she retires in the near future, Arkansas will be left with little to no regional participation.

Allison asked if a link could be placed on the conference registration allowing registrants to simultaneously register for SCWCA membership; Becky approved the idea, and Alanna also expressed agreement with a Google doc helping to put the information into a spreadsheet, making the work somewhat easier. Becky noted that she was also considering Wordpress, but she was leaning towards using Google docs.

Alanna clarified that IWCA was not pressing SCWCA for a membership at this time, but instead it was for our internal usage. All agreed that it would be helpful with outreach efforts.

2017 conference will be in Little Rock, so the idea of having this in place by then was discussed. Allison brought up the idea that some scholarship funds could be used at that time to invite some Arkansas people, while Lisa brought up the idea that our current overage could be used to invite of those people now, particularly with Julie in transition.

Becky notified Alanna that she would be in charge of scholarships for 2016 conference.

Allison reminded the group that it must be worded as a scholarship payment, for tax purposes. It could not be considered reimbursements. In the past, it has been a difficult process to track people down for reimbursements. She suggested implementing some additional restrictions that would make the process easier, including requiring attendees to stay at the conference hotel.

Dagmar noted that solid procedures had been put in place in the past by Chloe, and that we needed to get ahold of that information.

Alanna asked for clarification on her requirements as chair of scholarship committee, but Becky clarified that was her responsibility, instead. Alanna will cover the Outstanding Tutor Award. Dagmar expressed that she thought regional reps handled that, but Becky clarified the process further as needing to begin with Alanna as VP.

Becky also noted that information is currently on the SCWCA website, including submission guidelines. A current timeline needs to be updated and information sent out.

Discussion of the difference between room waivers and registration waivers was held, with the idea that some people are awarded one, and some awarded both. It is believed that Chloe is not going to be able to maintain as much involvement.

Lisa gave a quick update on the Ad Hoc committee, and Becky noted that she didn't think Chloe would be able to keep the commitment at this time. Discussion about other leadership possibilities was had, with the idea that the committee could either be suspended or postponed. Alison suggested naming some co-chairs.

Allison clarified the difference between room and registration waivers, with registration waivers not costing money out of pocket.

Becky asked for suggestions for co-chair for scholarship waivers. Becky asked Lisa to check in with Chloe about info for the Ad-Hoc committee.

Alanna asked for clarification on the membership option online, and what that language of the constitution should look like. She also discussed the importance of having an editable, easy to read document.

Becky asked everyone to review their roles and be prepared to discuss at the next meeting.

Alanna also noted that we could not vote on the constitutional changes until our membership list was updated; we cannot vote without it, obviously. Becky agreed that the plan was to have this completed and sent out via the list-serv ahead of the conference.

Becky then brought up the idea of adding additional representation and also scholarships/travel grants to our new HBCU, Hispanic and Native Indian colleges. This would apply as well to some of the community colleges, with the idea of a new Community College rep.

Dagmar suggested making a place for them in the constitution as well, and asked if the positions would have to be filled if it is listed. Becky suggested language that if no one could fill the positions, that would still be acceptable.

Becky discussed the need to now begin identifying reps in the colleges and universities that we want to encourage to become involved.

Allison suggested the \$100 room/night waiver that we have offered in the past as an incentive for these potential new members.

The financial update from Allison: after many years of finances being slim, we currently have \$37,884.00.

Overall, when conferences are held outside of Texas, less money is made because attendance is lower.

The money we have has to be spent. As a non-profit, this is problematic for us. Allison discussed the idea of investing or putting aside a lump amount. She suggests that we consider grants, scholarships, etc. But we also should not necessarily raise the price of the conference in order to make money or break even, when we have so much money on hand.

Each year, every conference host is sensitive to not going into the hold, but Allison noted that we are in such a healthy place right now that we could let up on that a bit.

Dagmar suggested an application process for the monies we are considering for these scholarships, which met with agreement.

Allison also noted that with IWCA now being held yearly, there would be more competition for conference attendance.

Lisa asked if the Texas conference still drew numbers from outside of Texas, or if just Texas people. Allison clarified that she believed more came to Texas because it was close to more of them. Some people have always and will always come, no matter the distance. But Texas locations, especially those held on the water, draw the largest crowds.

A lot of discussion was held on the importance of location for future conferences, balanced with the need to draw in potential new members from outside of Texas.

Allison also stated that we have a lot of leeway with the spending of this money, so we should carefully consider all of the possibilities.

Alanna also noted that with a clear membership list, outreach will be much easier. She also asked if we could get more communication between the board and conference coordinators/members to encourage more attendance.

Allison suggested that the board set the registration fee, which others agreed was a good idea.

Discussion then began about splitting \$1500 into 2-\$750 grants per year with some of our current overage. Julie suggested establishing criteria, and mentioned looking at current IWCA information as we begin this process.

Becky closed with encouraging board members to get the word out about the conference within their own circles.

Allison quickly reminded the group that the issue with the tax ID number needed to be settled, and she is working on getting an attorney to work pro-bono to help with restoring our number. She believes that it would be best to resurrect the old number (which could have gotten inadvertently altered in the process of being passed from year to year) versus applying for a new number.

The meeting was adjourned.