**Minutes of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets Board of Directors Meeting**

**October 31, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by President Jan Chronister at 10 AM. It was conducted via email because of cancellation of the Fellowship’s Fall 2020 Conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the meeting, written reports were circulated among board members for comment. The reports are posted on the Fellowship’s website, <https://www.wfop.org/>.

**Participants**: Nancy Austin, Michael Belongie, Naomi Cochran, Dennis Collier, Jan Chronister, Colleen Frentzel, Jeffrey Johannes, Joan Johannes. Michael Kriesel, Sandra Lindow, Nate Reid, James Roberts, Kathleen Serley, Tori Grant Welhouse, Ed Werstein. In addition, a quorum of board members returned checklists to Jan indicating support for the reports circulated prior to the meeting.

**Acceptance of Reports**: Jan accepted the minutes and other reports submitted prior to the meeting, including:

Minutes of the 2020 Spring Board Meeting: Dennis Collier

Board Decisions since the Spring Board Meeting: Dennis Collier

Treasurer’s report: Colleen Frentzel

Membership chair report: Naomi Cochran

Webmaster report: Tori Grant Welhouse

*Bramble* Report: Christina Kubasta

Poet Laureate Commission Report: Ed Werstein

Calendar Business Report: Jan Chronister (interim business manager)

2021 Calendar editors: Keesia Hyser, Nancy Jesse, Gillian Nevers

2022 Calendar editors: Jane Osypowski, Suzy Wedeward

Student Contest report: Jeff Anderson

2021 Spring Conference report: Ed Werstein (see motion and discussion below)

Triad contest: Joan and Jeffrey Johannes

Chapbook contest: Annette Grunseth

Special grant requests: Jan Chronister

75th anniversary observance: Michael Belongie

*Community and Connections* Anthology: Kathleen Serley

**Cancellation of Spring 2021 Conference**: Ed Werstein moved, seconded by James Roberts, that the 2021 Spring Conference at Blue Harbor Resort in Sheboygan be canceled. Motion carried 11-0.

The 2020 Spring Conference originally scheduled for the Blue Harbor was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Blue Harbor allowed cancellation without penalty provided the event was rescheduled at its facility within a year, so the 2021 Spring Conference was booked for that resort for April 30-May 1. Ed, East Region vice president, suggested canceling the 2021 conference because of the continuing increase in both COVID infections and deaths, with no effective remedy in sight. He believes that the sooner we act the easier cancellation and negotiation with Blue Harbor will be. If we decide to cancel, he will report Blue Harbor’s response to the executive board. Ed also said the WFOP might wish to consider a virtual gathering in the spring rather than an in-person event.

**Woodland Pattern Poetry Marathon**: Ed Werstein moved, seconded by Jan Chronister, that the WFOP support the annual Woodland Pattern Poetry Marathon, as it has in the past, by sponsoring an hour of the event, at a cost of $350. Motion carried 10-0.

According to its website, the 2021 marathon, on Saturday and Sunday, January 30-31, will not be in-person. Instead, the bookstore will “livecast pre-recorded performances by as may as 240 poets over the course of 2 days and 24 hours,” with each block featuring 10 poets reading for 5 minutes each, along with live conversation among curators, bookstore staff and audience members. Chat will be enabled through the marathon.

**Week of Wisconsin Poets**: WFOP member June Paul proposed that the Fellowship form a team to work with libraries, schools, colleges and universities to establish a Week of Wisconsin Poets. She also suggested contacting Wisconsin Public Television about airing poetry-related programs during that week.

Jan Chronister moved, seconded by Colleen Frentzel, to table the proposal. Motion carried 8-0.

**Adjournment**: Jan Chronister moved, seconded by Colleen Frentzel, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 PM.