

**Minutes of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets Board Meeting
April 29, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 PM. Attending were: Nancy Austin, Michael Belongie, Naomi Cochran, Cathryn Cofell, Dennis Collier, Colleen Frentzel, Michael Gadzik, Kathryn Gahl, Ronnie Hess, Joan Johannes, Fred Kreutz, Christina Kubasta, James Roberts, Kathleen Serley, Tori Grant Welhouse and Ed Werstein

1. Co-Presidents Cofell and Hess welcomed meeting participants, and each introduced herself or himself.
2. Co-Presidents Update – Co-President Hess thanked previous President Jan Chronister for her six years as president and her help in transitioning to the new leadership; retiring Muse Contest chair Fred Kreutz for his service; Michael Belongie for his many years of service, including his time as president and board member; Nancy Austin for organizing this Spring Conference; and Joan Johannes and Kathleen Serley for their work on the Fall Conference to be held in Wausau. She also reported that Nathan Reid is resigning as the 40-and-Under Board Representative because a job change is taking him to Michigan; he will remain a member of the WFOP and continue to help with plans for the 75th annual conference.

The co-presidents said they and Vice President Kubasta have reviewed where the WFOP is at, and what the fellowship should do moving forward. The latter includes more frequent board meetings, either in person or virtually; more engagement from board members and WFOP members, including on committees and other volunteer positions; improved use of technology for communications, including social media, and contest submissions; and better acknowledgement of financial donations. Two changes were being considered at this meeting: adoption of a code of ethics for board members and revisions to the fellowship's constitution and bylaws.

3. Old Business

- a. October 30, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes: Motion by Ronnie Hess, seconded by Tori Grant Welhouse to approve the minutes; motion carried.
- b. Secretary's Report and Archives Update: Dennis Collier reported on the items he had retrieved from former archivist Lewis Bosworth in 2021 (see written report). These materials need to be examined and transferred to the State Historical Society, which has earlier archives. Ronnie Hess suggested Ripon College and the Milwaukee Public Library as other possible homes for WFOP materials. In addition, the WFOP needs to find a new archivist and determine how to conserve materials, in paper or electronically, going forward; the Google Drive (next item) is a likely candidate. Michael Belongie said that materials from his term as president and from the 50th and 65th anniversary conferences are being held by the librarian and archivist at Holy Wisdom Monastery and at some point should be incorporated into the other Fellowship archives.
- c. Google Drive Update: Cathryn Cofell provided an update on materials in the drive. Most will be accessible to all board members, though use of some, such as contracts, will be restricted to elected officers. The drive is intended to become a permanent home for all WFOP documents and board members will be able to load materials there, though she asked persons not to make changes in the documents already stored. Kathryn Gahl asked if Google was the best platform for storing documents and Tori Grant Welhouse, the WFOP's webmaster, said that it probably is right now.

4. New Business

- a. Consent Agenda: Motion by Michael Belongie, seconded by Kathryn Gahl to accept the following reports by consent; motion carried
 - i. Calendar Business Manager Report
 - ii. Calendar Editors' Report
 - iii. Regional Vice President Reports

iv. Membership Chair Report
v. *Bramble* Report
vi. Contest Reports (Triad, Muse, Chapbook, Student): Fred Kreutz also reported that entries, and thus revenues from fees, in the Muse Contest were down, resulting in a deficit, though he thought that might be due to the pandemic and revenues might rebound. If not, the entry fee might have to be raised from the current \$4. Naomi Cochran and Joan Johannes, chairs of the Chapbook and Triad contests respectively, reported similar declines in entries.

- vii. Webmaster Report
- viii. Poet Laureate Commission Report
- ix. Social Media Report
- x. Donations Report
- xi. 75th Anniversary Conference Report

b. Treasurer's Report – Colleen Frentzel: Motion by James Roberts, seconded by Ed Werstein to accept the treasurer's report; motion carried. Ronnie Hess asked about the accounting for *Bramble*, which the treasurer's report shows as an expense without including revenue generated by that journal. Colleen explained that *Bramble* handles its own revenues and the expense represents what WFOP allots to *Bramble*. Colleen and journal editor Christine Kubasta will discuss how to report the journal's financial profile in the future. Colleen also answered questions about grants and will itemize them in the WFOP's fiscal year report.

c. Survey Results: Co-President Hess summarized the results of a survey of board membership conducted earlier this year (see written report). One of the priorities was a review of the quarterly *Museletter* and weekly calendar, and board members agreed that the committee should look at communications generally, not just the newsletter. Naomi Cochran, Kathryn Gahl and Tori Grant Welhouse agreed to serve on the committee. *Museletter* and calendar editor F.J. Bergmann will be asked for feedback on improvements.

d. Code of Ethics: Motion by Michael Belongie, seconded by Colleen Frentzel to adopt the Code of Ethics; motion carried. One typographical error on the draft code was corrected: deleting a close parenthesis on item 6.

e. Constitution and Bylaws Revision: Motion by Kathleen Serley, seconded by Ronnie Hess, to submit the amended Constitution and Bylaws to the membership for approval at the Fall 2022 general meeting; motion carried with one abstention. Two changes to the Bylaws suggested by Naomi Cochran were made prior to approval:

Article II, Section 2: the word "invitation" was replaced by "approval" to read: "A person lacking only the residential qualifications may become an Active member upon approval of the president and the membership chair. A member must be a resident of Wisconsin to hold office."

Article II, Section 3, Subsection (c): the word "cannot" was replaced by "does not" to read: "A Continued member is an Active member who does not pay dues, either permanently or temporarily, but whose membership is approved by the Board of Directors."

Prior to the vote, the board held a lengthy discussion on limiting board membership and voting rights to the immediate past president, rather than all of them. The impetus for the change was removal of an obstacle to meeting quorum requirements for a board meeting. Past presidents without voting rights are welcome to attend board meetings and serve in an advisory capacity.

5. Next Board Meeting: to be scheduled for the summer

6. Adjournment: Motion by Kathryn Gahl, seconded by Ed Werstein, to adjourn the meeting; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM.