

Hawaii Writers Guild  
-MINUTES of the SPECIAL PLANNING Meeting-  
January 25, 2024

Minutes of the Hawaii Writers Guild (HWG) Board of Directors meeting, held *via* Zoom. All times noted refer to Hawaii-Aleutian Standard Time.

Officers and Directors present *via* Zoom:

Diane Revell — *President and North Kohala-area Regional Director*  
Bruce Stern — *Vice President*  
Catherine Tripp — *Treasurer*  
Donna Beumler — *Secretary*  
Joy Fisher — *Public Relations Director*

Other Members present *via* Zoom:

Duncan Dempster — *Webmaster*  
Parrissa Eyorokon  
Angela Leslee

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**REGULAR SESSION (open to general membership)—**

**1. PRESIDENT DIANE REVELL CALLED THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE MEETING TO ORDER at 6:06 pm.**

**a.) Goals, objectives, and general planning for 2024:** Diane remarked that the general purpose of this “special planning” meeting is to plan what HWG would like to accomplish in the coming year, with, she noted, a strong emphasis on moving toward in-person events, workshops and activities. Although the Guild did develop an on-line presence *via* its YouTube programs during the early years of the pandemic, Diane indicated that it would be ideal to begin adding some community events and public readings, such as those which were sponsored by the Guild at the library in Kapa’au pre-pandemic. She noted that the Guild is a non-profit organization, and as such includes amongst its goals involvement in the community and with local youth, in addition to supporting writers themselves. Finally, Diane made reference to the fact that, because of the restrictions on gatherings during the early years of the pandemic, HWG has a healthy treasury with plenty of funds with which to sponsor appropriate in-person activities.

**b.) Proposal for endorsement of student poetry contest (attached to the agenda):** The Board discussed the written proposal, attached to the meeting Agenda, for a youth

poetry contest in the North Kohala area, to be organized by members Carol Prescott and Michael Foley. The organizers hope to gauge interest in a youth creative writing workshop by offering a poetry contest to high school students with cash prizes. Diane mentioned that both Carol and Michael have backgrounds which would make them highly suitable for this type of endeavor. Donna moved that HWG add its enthusiastic endorsement to the proposal of a poetry contest for local students; Diane seconded the motion, and it passed by a unanimous vote of all voting members present. Discussion then ensued as to whether to offer financial support in the form of cash awards to supplement the first-place prize of \$500, to be paid for personally by Carol and Michael. Bruce moved to authorize a matching award in the form of a \$300 second-place cash prize and a \$200 third-place cash prize. Diane seconded Bruce's motion, and the motion passed by a majority of voting members present. Concomitantly with this vote, Donna e-mailed both Carol and Michael with the news of the Guild's endorsement and pledge of matching funds.

**c.) Nomination of Gwyn Gorg as Events Director:** The Board discussed the gracious offer by member Gwyn Gorg to serve as the Guild's events director, having been recruited by Guild members who are very familiar with both her writing and her expertise in this area. It was noted that Gwyn was contacted by phone at the beginning of the meeting, and that she was having trouble logging on to Zoom. Bruce referenced some of Gwyn's outstanding accomplishments and involvement in community activities, and moved that she be elected as the Guild's new Events Director. Catherine seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous approval of all voting members present. The Board indicated its appreciation to Gwyn for stepping up to the plate and agreeing to fulfill this important role for HWG.

**2. MEMBERS' SUGGESTIONS:** It was discussed that several members offered suggestions for Guild activities in 2024 during the Annual Meeting held on January 20th. Diane noted that the Guild always welcomes suggestions, and especially appreciates members volunteering their time and expertise to *implement* their suggestions. Member suggestions included:

- Writing skills workshop focusing on developing characters
- Publishing a print version of *Latitudes*
- Developing a "speakers bureau" of members to speak at schools, poetry clubs, Rotary meetings, etc.
- Self-publishing
- The use of rhetoric in non-fiction

As to the subject of sponsoring workshops designed to enhance the writing skills of members, Diane made reference to an individual who appears to have the requisite expertise, and indicated that she has sent contact information for this person to Diann Wilson for her to consider interviewing him on the Guild's YouTube program, *Write On!* As pertains to developing a workshop on the use of rhetoric in non-fiction, Diane has identified another individual who may be of assistance in this regard, and she has also forwarded that information to Diann Wilson.

There was then extensive discussion concerning developing workshops or trainings on the subject of self-publishing, which appears to be a topic of keen interest among members.. Bruce referenced a self-publishing workshop which he attended in the past and which was extremely well-done and very helpful. It was also noted that there is at least one member of Hawaii Writers Alliance who has expertise in this regard and who might be amenable to working with the Guild on a project of this type. Angela then made reference to her extensive experience in self-publishing with respect to her three books, as well as in providing assistance and sharing her resources in order for others to self-publish their work. She kindly offered to organize a seminar or workshop in order to share her knowledge and experience. The Board agreed to this offer, and extended its appreciation to Angela for her assistance. Joy suggested that the workshop be recorded so that it can be later accessed by people who were unable to attend in person; Bruce also noted that it would be ideal if Angela could include a Zoom or other on-line component in such a workshop in order to reach more people.

The recurring topic of developing a print version of *Latitudes* was then discussed in detail. Catherine was enthusiastic about the project, indicating her belief that the proceeds from the sale of these books would likely cover publishing costs. Donating copies to libraries and other community organizations was also mentioned, as has been discussed previously when this subject has been raised, as was the possibility of public readings from the book. Both Bruce and Donna indicated their enthusiasm as well for such a project; however, they noted that the original permission obtained by authors regarding volumes 1 through 4 of *Latitudes* was for publication in **on-line** versions of the journal only; any effort to include those works in a print volume would require obtaining additional permission from the authors. Following was a lengthy discussion of what types of permission, or copyrights, the Guild should be seeking from authors who wish to publish in future volumes of *Latitudes*. Joy made reference to a recent e-mail by Margaret Zacharias, managing editor of *Latitudes V*, in which she provided extensive information based upon her research into how other journals choose to handle this issue. Diane stated that she is strongly in favor of a more structured “permission” process in the future. Duncan also stated his general agreement that a print version of *Latitudes* is important for the Board to consider; however, as the webmaster who in the past has formatted and posted all volumes of *Latitudes* on the website, he noted the very real problems in re-formatting the on-line work for a print volume. Duncan requested that the Board table this discussion until such time as Margaret could be present and participate. It was agreed that this issue will be added to the agenda for the February meeting.

As to the subject of creating a “speakers bureau” whereby members may offer to speak on topics of literary interest in schools and at meetings of community organizations, it was noted that, in the past, the Guild has not been entirely successful in its solicitation of members to join in this type of activity. Diane proposed that the Board consider developing a more formalized, standard list of members who are willing to go out into the community and speak on topics of literary interest. Bruce suggested that this would be a project in which to involve the Guild’s new Events Director, Gwyn Gorg. Donna made reference to past experiences of the Board in

attempting to solicit members to respond to queries from the community, noting that most of those attempts have been unsuccessful. Catherine proposed that those individuals who have in the past been interviewed by Diann Wilson for *Write On!* be considered for participation in an HWG “speakers bureau”; however, it was mentioned that many of those people interviewed are not Guild members. The point was made that there is value in in-person contact that is separate and apart from on-line meetings and forums; however, on-line platforms like Zoom continue to reach a broader audience and invite participation from those who cannot attend in person. It was also observed that COVID continues to spread through our community, resulting in some people limiting their in-person activities.

Parrissa invited further discussion on the best ways to interest members in becoming involved, in particular in positions of leadership. Board members mentioned that the query as to whether a prospective member might be interested in volunteering was added to the HWG membership application this past year. Both Parrissa and Angela suggested that it might be helpful to have some kind of follow-up in place, and Donna inquired of Joy as to whether she could include a more specific follow-up question in the new member questionnaire which she developed and which she e-mails to all new members; Joy agreed that she is happy to add this area of inquiry. Catherine raised the issue as to whether *Member News* could be printed and mailed to members twice per year, and the Board concluded generally that this approach would not be especially productive. Joy mentioned that in each issue of the Guild’s on-line newsletter of *Member News* (Fall and Spring) she does reference the available opportunities for members to become more involved in Guild activities. She noted that the “Transitions” column in particular identifies precise vacancies and areas of need. Diane suggested that some of the tasks for which there is a need for volunteers could be divided up into more manageable tasks, for example *facilitating* public readings and *hosting* public readings could involve two different skills for two different people. Joy mentioned that the Guild continues to support its members who read from and then sell their books at venues like the Kona Stories bookstore in Keauhou, but that the Guild cannot sell their books for them due to our non-profit status.

**3. VACANCIES AND OPPORTUNITIES:** Donna identified the following vacancies or opportunities and asked for ideas as to how to solicit interest from amongst the membership:

- Website assistant
- *Member News* co-editor
- Social Media manager
- YouTube Production facilitator for “*Inside the Writer’s Studio*”
- Public Readings facilitator/host
- Co-host for YouTube Production “*Write on!*”

Donna also noted that this past year, the Board prepared and distributed a flyer which was intended to advertise vacancies and gauge interest amongst members to take on leadership roles. She added that there were only two members who responded. Further, Joy reiterated that she does highlight vacancies and opportunities in each issue of *Member News*.

Regarding the need to find someone to serve as a website assistant or trainee, Catherine addressed the issue of the Guild's past practice of having the webmaster collect membership dues paid through PayPal on the website. She stated that she is working with Duncan to "decouple" the task of collecting dues from the website management activities. Catherine strongly urged the Board to consider moving the website from Weebly to a new platform in 2024. Duncan agreed, but is concerned that there is no readily available way to convert the data from Weebly to a new platform. Catherine feels that this can be done, however, and Angela mentioned that she has had great success with SquareSpace. Donna inquired as to whether it would be worth spending the money to hire someone to build a new website using another platform, and the Board indicated its preference to find a member to do this at no cost. It was agreed that this issue will require a separate meeting dedicated to this topic. Parissa suggested that HWG consider looking to schools and colleges which might authorize students to intern with the Guild of this purpose in exchange for credit. The Board requested that Parrissa pursue this further with the communications departments at local schools. Diane suggested that it would be helpful if Angela could take a portion of our current website and do a mock-up of what would be entailed to re-create or rebuild the data on another platform. It was discussed that SquareSpace offers a free trial, with a fee of \$14.95 each month thereafter, and that Weebly's fee is approximately \$20 per month. Joy mentioned that it might be helpful to inquire as to what web platforms other writing groups use for their websites.

#### 4. FINANCIAL PLANNING:

a.) **Annual Budget:** Catherine indicated that she had not yet prepared an annual budget. Bruce reminded the Board that an annual budget is a requirement of the Guild's Bylaws. He noted that, typically, the Board votes on the expenditures set forth in such a document, authorizing those stated expenditures without the need for further approval. Bruce suggested that Catherine look to the 2023 Annual Budget prepared by then-treasurer Bob Lupo for some idea as to regular, continuing expenditures such as the YouTube channel, post office box rental, and costs associated with the website platform. Additional expenditures that Catherine can anticipate and include are a donation to the MLK Jr., Peace Poem Project, and the \$500 commitment to the youth poetry contest in North Kohala. Catherine requested that Board members e-mail her with any other items they'd like to see included in the annual budget.

b.) **Liability Insurance:** Diane advised that she has had no luck with either Monarch Insurance or State Farm in pursuing information about and the purchase of "directors and officers liability insurance." She will follow-up with the Hawaii Alliance of Non-profit Organizations (HANO). In addition, Catherine indicated that she is aware of a possible option in this regard, and will contact Diane directly.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Joy announced that HWG has received permission to staff an informational table at the **Waimea Cherry Blossom Festival on Saturday, February 3, 2024**. She indicated that the set-up time is 7:00 am, and that she will follow-up in terms of identifying the Guild's specific "slot number." She did note that the \$100 check had been returned because the table is informational only.

The next **Board of Directors meeting** is scheduled for Thursday, February 22, 2024 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

All meetings for the foreseeable future will be **held via Zoom ONLY and will be hosted by Duncan.**

**Requests for items to be added to the agenda for the next regular Board meeting should be sent via email to President Diane Revell ([diane.b.revell@gmail.com](mailto:diane.b.revell@gmail.com)) and Secretary Donna Beumler ([dmbeumler@gmail.com](mailto:dmbeumler@gmail.com)) at least 10 days prior to the next meeting (no later than February 12, 2024). The final agenda will be emailed to the full membership five days prior to the meeting.**

**The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted this 17th day of February, 2024.

By: \_\_\_Donna Beumler\_

Donna Beumler

Secretary, Hawaii Writers Guild