

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

Officers and Directors present via Zoom:

Diane Revell —*President and North Kohala-area Regional Representative*

Bruce Stern — *Vice President*

Donna Beumler —*Secretary*

Joy Fisher —*Public Relations Director*

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*[Note: The meeting was delayed due to unanticipated problems in accessing the Zoom platform. While the four Board members who had planned to be present were ultimately able to participate, one Guild member e-mailed Donna just prior to the meeting regarding this issue, and he unfortunately was not able to access Zoom. Following the meeting, Donna e-mailed webmaster Duncan Dempster, who had not been in attendance due to a prior engagement, and brought this matter to his attention].*

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** President Diane Revell called the meeting to order at **6:52 pm**.

2. **READINGS AND RESPONSES-OPEN FORUM / RESIGNATION OF FACILITATOR MARGARET ZACHARIAS:** The Board addressed the issue of maintaining the on-line writers group known as “Readings and Responses-Open Forum,” in light of the recent resignation of facilitator Margaret Zacharias. The Board acknowledged the hard work that Margaret devoted to R&R-Open Forum, and remarked upon its success. There was unanimous agreement that continuing to offer this program to Guild members is a priority.

Joy stated that she is writing an article for the upcoming issue of the Guild’s newsletter, *Member News*, announcing the vacancy. In this regard, Joy spoke with Margaret inquiring as to Margaret’s willingness to train someone to take over as facilitator; however, Margaret was reticent to offer to train a new facilitator, preferring the term “orient.” Joy’s article indicates that any Guild member interested in taking over the reins of R&R-Open Forum should get touch with President Diane Revell, and then Diane can follow-up with Margaret.

Diane and Bruce requested that, pending publication of the story in the newsletter, Donna send an e-mail to the general membership advising that R&R-Open Forum is on hiatus due to Margaret’s resignation, and soliciting interest in the position of on-line facilitator. Board members expressed a willingness to be open to a new facilitator who would like to make

changes, or who otherwise might have ideas as to how best to move forward with this popular on-line group for Guild members. It was noted that facilitating this type of meeting requires certain skills, as group dynamics can occasionally be tense or challenging.

The Board noted that Margaret's resignation appears to affect only the "Open Forum" group, and not the "Fiction Focus" nor "Non-fiction Focus" on-line groups. There was some discussion as to the precise role that Margaret played, and it was remarked that, in addition to sending out e-mail invitations to attend these meetings *via* Zoom once per month, Margaret often served as Zoom "host," as well as setting forth structure and guidelines for the meetings. Bruce inquired as to whether it would be prudent to ask Margaret whether she had any recommendations for her successor, but Diane responded that the one individual whom Margaret considered highly qualified for this role is not available at this time. Joy also stated that she had brought this subject up with Margaret, but that Margaret declined to recommend someone to take her place.

**3. UPDATE— "PEACE POEM PROJECT" GATHERING IN HILO:** In an effort to demonstrate Guild support of youth writing projects, Diane attended the Peace Poem Project awards ceremony for local youth in Hilo this past April. Joy will be including a summary of the event, as reported by Diane, in the upcoming issue of *Member News*. Diane remarked that the event was well-attended, and noted that the foundation of the Peace Poem Project is in part derived from the life and teachings of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Diane made contact with the event organizer, Melinda Gohn, as well as Guild member Gwyn Gorg who was assisting, and was assigned the task of meeting late-comers at the door.

The event was structured so that each grade level typically had a first- and second-place winner. There were many photo opportunities, and a representative of the Mayor's office was in attendance. Diane noted that there was also an award acknowledging "teacher of the year." A celebratory brunch was held the following day by the organizers, which Diane was not able to attend. Diane had inquired as to how the Guild might support the Peace Poem Project in the future, and indicated that Guild members located on Hawaiian islands other than Maui might best be in a position to assist, as the project is based on Maui. They have enough support on Maui but could use help with award ceremonies on the other islands. The suggestion was made that HWG consider a cash donation to the project, which, it was observed, would only be possible if the project is a §501(c)(3) organization. Bruce inquired as to whether there is a Peace Poem Project website with information concerning how to make a donation. Diane advised that the website can be located at [peacepoem.org](http://peacepoem.org).

**4. MEMBERSHIP REPORT:** Prior to the meeting, Bruce e-mailed to Board members updated Membership Logs. Current active HWG members total 63, with one student member. The logs reflect the newest members, and Bruce has updated the Google-groups e-mail list as well. Members who, at this date, have not yet paid dues (which were payable in January) are listed as "late." To the extent that some of the "late" members may simply have overlooked the need to renew their membership, Bruce will follow-up. It was also discussed that a number of

members have indicated that they've chosen not to renew due to the Guild's §501(c)(3) status and the resulting inability of the Guild to directly sell members' books. The Board continues to be of the opinion that membership in the Guild provides valuable support and assistance to writers in a variety of different ways consistent with its non-profit status. In this regard, Diane is working on developing a list of the many ways in which membership in HWG can actively benefit writers, such as displaying members' books at Guild information tables and including links to purchase books on HWG's website. Bruce added that there are additional ways in which HWG can support members indirectly with the sale of their books, including presenting seminars on how to self-publish. He further referenced the issue raised previously by Donna concerning amending the Bylaws to delete reference to the Guild directly involving itself in the sale of books, and opined that it is important to move forward with the proposed amendments.

Bruce also brought up the topic of how best to utilize the Guild's existing funds. He requested that the Board consider planning in this regard. Donna reminded the Board that the proposed print version of HWG's on-line literary journal *Latitudes* remains in the planning stage and will likely require some expenditures of Guild funds. It was noted, however, that the details of putting together a print version or anthology will necessarily be delayed due to Bob finding it necessary to spend time dealing with unexpected family issues.

**5. TREASURER'S REPORT:** Although Bob was not able to participate in the meeting this date, information he provided prior to the meeting *via* e-mail indicated that, as of May 24, 2023, the Guild's ASB operating balance is \$10, 272.22. This figure includes two new membership initiations and one membership renewal.

**6. SECRETARY'S UPDATE:** Donna addressed the issue of amending the Bylaws, and referred Board members to the agenda, where she'd listed three main areas of concern. In particular, referring to §6.3.1.3, she believes the language indicating that HWG involves itself in the sale of members books pre-dated the Guild's actual §501(c)(3) status, and appears to be contrary to HWG's non-profit designation. Donna suggested that Board members give some thought to re-wording these sections of the Bylaws.

In the event that the Board does find it necessary to amend the Bylaws, that might also be the time to work on other amendments, such as re-defining or expanding the definition of "member." For example, Donna suggested that deleting the phrase "*in print*" in §3.1 might capture writers who do not work in traditional arenas, but who nevertheless would be a good fit for the Guild (those who produce podcasts, for example.). The Bylaws also provide that the Guild may establish "other classes of membership in its Policies & Procedures," which Donna finds confusing as she is not aware of who is keeping a list of such policies, nor what particular policies have already been enacted. Diane will follow-up on this, and Bruce advised that the purpose of maintaining "policies and procedures" is so that changes can be made without the necessity of amending the Bylaws.

Diane suggested that the Board consider changing the language in the Bylaws from *selling books* and *book sales* to “displaying books.” Donna indicated that she would draft a proposed amendment utilizing this language, and requested that anyone who had other thoughts or suggestions in this regard send her an e-mail.

On the topic of on-line grant writing classes (as discussed in her Memorandum of March 3, 2023), Donna advised that she has completed the first of a series of three free, on-line grant writing courses through [nonprofitready.org](http://nonprofitready.org). She mentioned that she was pleased with the content, which was fairly basic yet thorough. Donna will report back when she has completed the series with respect to whether the courses have some relevancy to Guild endeavors.

Finally, regarding Frank Reilly and the nascent Kauai Readings and Responses writers group, Donna mentioned that the group had been scheduled to meet this evening, but that she believed the meeting was cancelled so as to not have a Zoom-related conflict with the Board meeting.

## **7. COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES:**

a.) EVENTS COMMITTEE: Bryan was not available to report this evening. Diane reported that she has been in touch with a former Guild member regarding identifying a contact person for Waimea’s annual Cherry Blossom Festival, at which the Guild traditionally maintains a table. Although there was some confusion and perhaps inaccurate information about HWG relayed by the former member, Diane was able to locate an individual associated with the festival with whom she will discuss HWG’s desire to be reinstated at that event so as to maintain an informational table at the festival in the future.

b.) PUBLIC RELATIONS: Joy indicated that she has completed all the copy for the next issue of *Member News*, and has turned that over to Duncan for posting to the website. There is some question as to whether one new member, who is included in the column “New Member Spotlight,” is current in his dues. Joy will ask Duncan to hold off on posting that particular portion of the column until she is able to clarify the situation. Additionally, she just received a completed new member questionnaire from another individual and will make sure that he is included in the “Spotlight” column. Joy remarked that eleven new members will be highlighted in this issue of *Member News*. She also noted that several members have been published recently, or have otherwise been very involved in interesting writing projects, and she has included articles in the newsletter sharing these achievements.

c.) WEBSITE UPDATES: Duncan was not able to participate in the meeting this evening; however, prior to the meeting he provided an e-mail update as to his activities. Duncan indicates that he has added “Our Author’s” pages for two new members, and that he is currently working on their personal pages. He is also more than half-way through completion of the posting of the newest issue of *Member News*, and is following up with some newer members regarding their

personal bios on the website. Finally, Duncan mentioned in his e-mail that his efforts to work with Carol Prescott on web-related issues have been delayed due to her recent travels off island.

d.) LATITUDES I - print version: Bob was unavailable to provide an update, but did advise prior to the meeting *via* e-mail that there is nothing further to add at this time to previous discussions. The Board briefly remarked on the need to obtain written consents from *every* author prior to publishing their work, regardless of whether they originally consented to have their work published in any of the on-line versions of *Latitudes*. In this regard, Bruce mentioned different licensing options available for authors.

e.) REGIONAL DIRECTOR REPORTS:

—**Volcano-area**: Bryan was unavailable to report at this time.

—**North Kohala-area**: Diane reported that North Kohala writers met this afternoon *via* Zoom. The gathering was small, but it was a productive meeting. Diane mentioned that one of the members of the group had her work recently accepted for publication, and Joy will make sure to include this in the Fall issue of *Member News*.

—**Tutu's House**: Joy and Bruce reported that the Tutu's House group continues to meet *via* Zoom every Tuesday, and that attendance, which continues to be consistent, numbers approximately 5 to 6 people. Most of those who attend do bring their writing for feedback.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next **Board of Directors meeting** is scheduled for June 22, 2023 at 6:30 pm.

Due to the on-going pandemic, 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 ([dmbaumler@gmail.com](mailto:dmbaumler@gmail.com)) at least 10 days prior to the next meeting (no later than June 12, 2023). 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 10th day of June, 2023

By: Donna Beumler

Donna Beumler

Secretary

Hawaii Writers Guild