

Hawaii Writers Guild
-MINUTES of the Board of Directors Meeting-
November 21, 2023

Minutes of the Hawaii Writers Guild (HWG) Board of Directors meeting, held *via Zoom*. All times noted refer to Hawaii-Aleutian Standard Time. Action items identified for follow-up are italicized and underlined.

Officers and Directors present via Zoom:

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

Bruce Stern — *Vice President*

Catherine Tripp — *In-coming Treasurer*

Donna Beumler —*Secretary*

Joy Fisher —*Public Relations Director*

Frank Reilly —*Kauai Regional Director*

Other Members present via Zoom:

Duncan Dempster —*Webmaster*

Dale Baker

REGULAR SESSION (open to general membership)—

1. PRESIDENT DIANE REVELL CALLED THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE MEETING TO ORDER at 6:31 pm.

a.) Liability Insurance generally: In follow up to the Board's previous discussion concerning whether the Guild should obtain liability insurance for its officers and directors, Diane obtained contact information from Hawaii Alliance for Nonprofit Organizations (HANO) for an insurance representative with Monarch Insurance. She has submitted some preliminary information which Monarch requested, and will report when she hears back from the insurance company with details concerning coverage options and premium costs.

b.) Phishing with respect to Board members and their e-mail addresses: It was noted that some Board members receive “phishing” e-mails, or fraudulent e-mails which purport to be from other Board members, usually involving requests for money or the purchase of gift cards. Although Donna had previously referred to this practice as “hacking,” it was clarified that the fraudulent e-mails do not actually originate from a Board member’s e-mail address, and are not considered “hacking.” Discussion ensued regarding the fact that Board members’ e-mail addresses appear on the Guild’s website, which is available to the public. Members of the Board who do not wish to have their primary e-mail addresses made available to the public may establish secondary e-mail addresses for purposes of Guild matters, and *Duncan will post the secondary addresses on the website, thus preserving the integrity of the primary e-mail addresses.* Diane noted that one of the reasons the website includes e-mail addresses under “Guild Business-Officers and Directors,” is because Guild members are not able to respond individually to a Guild Google-groups e-mail. Duncan also advised that there currently exists only one HWG-specific e-mail address (admin@hawaiiwritersguild.com), which he administers, but that additional accounts can be established for a small fee.

c.) Assessment of dues for new members: Catherine reviewed her proposal to establish dues schedules for new members as of the month they join the Guild, rather than in January of each year, as is the current practice. It was clarified that all current members would continue to be invoiced for their annual dues each January; however, members who join during or after January of 2024, would be invoiced each year in the month in which they joined the Guild.

In a related issue, Catherine suggested “de-coupling” the dues payment process on the website from the new member application process. *She advised that she would set up a PayPal account, and will coordinate closely with Duncan to remove the dues payment option from the Guild’s website.* All dues payments made via paper checks will go directly to the Guild’s post office box in Waimea, as is currently the process. Bruce will require that Catherine coordinate with him in order that he may continue to maintain accurate membership logs, and *Duncan will update the webpage to reflect the change in this process.* There was opportunity for discussion on this topic, with no Board members expressing an objection to the changes.

Catherine tendered a resolution which would achieve the payment process with changes as outlined above. Diane seconded the resolution. There being no opposition from any Board member, the resolution passed. In order that Catherine may be able to access the Guild’s post office box, *Donna will deliver to her the extra key for the box,* with Diane maintaining possession of the other key. Catherine plans to pick up the mail three times per week at the post office in Waimea.

d.) Bylaws resolution: reducing the number of signatures required to issue checks/§8.1.1: The Board considered the resolution, appended to the agenda for today’s meeting as Attachment “A,” which would delete from the Bylaws the requirement that two Board members sign all Guild checks. Catherine, as the incoming treasurer, agreed that the requirement

is inefficient and unnecessary. Diane tendered the resolution, Joy seconded, and the resolution passed by unanimous vote. The Bylaws will be amended to delete the last sentence of §8.1.1.

e.) Retention of records of Board meetings: The Board reviewed the practice of recording the Board of Directors monthly meetings, and discussed whether it is necessary to archive those audio recordings. Duncan advised that, at the beginning of each meeting, he activates the Zoom “record” function (with the agreement of all present) and that the recording is maintained by Zoom. He then forwards the recording to Donna to assist her with the preparation of the minutes of the meeting; once the minutes are finalized, the recording is destroyed. Duncan noted that the Zoom recordings are not permanently archived. It was the consensus that implementing a policy whereby a Board member downloads and archives all recordings of every Board meeting would be cumbersome, voluminous, and inefficient. Donna pointed out that the written minutes are the official record of the meeting, and on occasion, have been used to formally conduct business —such as when the Guild’s bank requested to see a copy of the minutes which reflected a change in the Guild’s treasurer. It was also noted that the minutes, once finalized, are posted to the website and available for viewing by members as well as by the general public. Under the circumstances, the Board unanimously agreed that there is no need to archive or otherwise maintain the audio recordings.

f.) Report on Kauai Writers Conference: Diane advised that she very much appreciated the time and effort which Joy extended in staffing the Guild’s informational table at the Conference. The table was provided free of charge by Conference organizers. Joy in turn indicated that she is grateful to Diane for her assistance with staffing the table. Joy made reference to a sign-up sheet that was available at the table during the Conference, and is pleased to report that thirty people signed up to request more information about HWG. The sign-up sheet will also be an important tool in organizing members and potential members by island of residence, which is becoming more and more important as the Guild continues to receive applications from writers beyond the Big Island. *Joy advised that she will inquire of Frank Reilly and Cheryl Ann Farrell as to their availability to serve as contact points for inquiries from Kauai-based writers, and she will attempt to connect with Phil Anderson to assess his willingness to do the same for Maui-based writers. She will draft an e-mail in this regard, and forward the draft to Frank and Cheryl Ann, as well as Phil, for their input.* Diane made reference to a potential member located on Oahu who indicated an interest in organizing gatherings of writers in her area.

Joy mentioned that she has posted photos from the event on the Guild’s Facebook pages, including photos of the Saturday dinner which she organized —and which was attended by 18 Guild members and friends. Also, Diane remarked upon the high quality of the speakers at the conference, and made reference to a particular speaker, James Sturz, who is local to North Kohala, and whose presentation on “creating a sense of place” was especially well-received. Joy concurred that his sessions were excellent. The Board discussed the potential for soliciting Mr. Sturz in the future to conduct a presentation on behalf of the Guild, as well as the hope that he may choose to join HWG.

g.) Annual Meeting: Pursuant to the Guild’s Bylaws, the Board set the date of **Saturday, January 20, 2024** for the Guild’s “Annual Meeting.” The meeting will begin at 2:00 pm Hawaii time, and will be held solely *via Zoom*; the meeting i.d. and password will be the same as is used for all Board meetings. *Diane will draft and forward a list of items to be covered at the annual meeting, including soliciting input on future activities from members, and the election of officers. Joy will contact those members who have published this year in order to collect donated books to award as prizes during the Guild’s usual opportunity drawing, known as “the spinning game.” Donna will draft a “save the date” notice for the Board’s consideration.* Diane suggested that the formal invitation include a request for RSVPs. Bruce observed that the 20th of January is an ideal date for the Annual Meeting, as it is just prior to the monthly BOD meeting—to be held on January 25, 2024—and there may be issues which arise at the Annual Meeting which would be appropriate to discuss at the Board meeting. In this regard, Joy noted that *the date for the annual “Special Planning Meeting” should be set at the January BOD meeting.*

2. **MEMBERSHIP REPORT:** Prior to the meeting, Bruce e-mailed to Board members updated Membership Logs and the most recent Opt-in List. Current active, paid HWG members total 75, including one student member. Additionally, 41 members have asked to have their e-mail addresses included on the Guild’s “Opt-in List,” which is created and maintained by Bruce as a Google-group. This list is to be used for networking and mentoring purposes, and is not intended for use as a marketing tool. In addition, Bruce has drafted a “Policies and Procedures” document which outlines his duties as Membership Director, and includes maintaining the membership logs and the opt-in list. He has submitted this draft to Board members for review and comments.

3. **TREASURER’S REPORT:** Diane, as interim treasurer, advised that, as of October 26, 2023, the Guild’s ASB operating balance is \$10,012. It was noted that the Guild’s treasury continues to grow, in large part because the COVID pandemic has thus far eliminated in-person trainings, presentations, and gatherings—resulting in the elimination of the need to pay to rent venues for these events. Catherine, as in-coming treasurer, has now received, reviewed, and organized the materials contained in the boxes which have been turned over by the previous treasurer, Bob Lupo. Catherine expressed her appreciation to Diane for continuing with treasurer duties during the transition.

4. **SECRETARY’S UPDATE:** Donna proposed an addition to “Policies and Procedures” which would allow the secretary to consider silence as assent to the draft version of Minutes after 14 days post-distribution. She had attached suggested language as “Exhibit “B” to the agenda. Donna reminded the Board, that, in the event the Minutes are finalized and then an error is discovered, the Minutes can always be amended. Opportunity for discussion on this topic was provided, and it was agreed by all present that this policy would assist in efficiently processing the minutes on a timely basis. No objections to this procedure being forthcoming, *Donna will provide a copy of this “Policy and Procedure” to Duncan for posting to the website*

under “Guild Business.” Diane requested that Donna include the date of the 14-day deadline in the e-mail accompanying the draft of the Minutes. Joy reminded all present that it is the responsibility of all officers and directors to review the draft of minutes from each meeting.

5. **COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES:**

a.) EVENTS COMMITTEE: The events director position remains vacant.

b.) PUBLIC RELATIONS: Joy will be following up with respect to the sign-up sheet from the Kauai Writers Conference, as described above. Additionally, she is working to finish up the Fall edition of the Guild’s newsletter. Feature stories will include an article about the Kauai Writers Conference, as well as photos from that event.

c.) WEBSITE UPDATES: Duncan reports that this past month has been relatively slow with respect to web activity, but that a current member has asked that changes be made to her personal page. In addition, a prospective member contacted Duncan with a query as to how she might join, and Duncan referred her to the application, and other pertinent information available on the website. Also, Duncan mentioned that his second audio book has been completed and is now available. This is the audio edition of “Where Are You?,” the sequel to “Chapel On the Moor.” Duncan noted that he previously provided information about how to produce an audio book during a YouTube “*Write On!*” episode hosted by Diann Wilson.

d.) REGIONAL DIRECTOR REPORTS:

—**Volcano-area**: Bryan was not available to provide an update at this time. However, Diane has spoken to him concerning the activities of the Volcano-area writers, and he advised that they continue to be active, and are hard at work on their third anthology.

—**North Kohala-area**: Diane reported that she is arranging a special meeting of the North Kohala-area writers to solicit feedback concerning the Kauai Writers Conference generally, and some of its important opportunities more specifically, such as the “pitch sessions,” which members Carol Prescott and Virginia Fortner participated in. Diane mentioned to Dale, who resides on Maui, that the North Kohala-area writers meet *via* Zoom twice monthly, on Thursdays, from 2 to 4 pm, and that writers are welcome to participate even though they may not live in North Kohala; in fact, one of the more active participants lives—like Dale—on Maui. Diane directed Dale to the Guild’s website, where, under “support groups” she might find a group to join at a date and time which is convenient for her.

—**Tutu’s House**: Bruce advised that attendance has recently been fairly slow. However, the interaction is quite productive. The group continues to meet Tuesday mornings at 10:00 am *via* Zoom only.

—**Kauai Readings and Responses:** Frank reported that the Kauai writers group continues to grow. During recent meetings, there has been a need to limit the number of people who are reading their work to six readers, in order to allow sufficient time for feedback. The group is so productive and active that Frank is considering moving from a twice-monthly schedule to weekly meetings in order to accommodate all who wish to read. Joy inquired as to how Frank is coordinating his group with the Readings & Responses group facilitated by Cheryl Ann—who is also based on Kauai. Frank advised that Cheryl Ann’s group meets *via Zoom* on weekends, accommodating those for whom a weekend meeting is more practical.

—**Other reports - Non-fiction Focus Writers Group/ Readings and Responses-Open Forum Writers Group:** Joy advised that the non-fiction focus group continues to meet via zoom two Sundays each month, reading from long-form fiction works which are in progress. Typically four writers participate in the Sunday meetings. Although Cheryl Ann was not available this date to report on Readings & Responses, Frank did mention that the meetings continue to go well (as described above).

6. OTHER BUSINESS/PARKING LOT:

Diane noted that Diann Wilson has indicated a willingness, at least for now, to continue to produce *Write On!* YouTube presentations for the Guild, despite the fact that she has moved off-island. Diane will be coordinating with Margaret Zacharias to interview her for an episode regarding the *Latitudes* submission process, and also plans to host an episode exploring issues related to AI.

New member Dale Baker was given an opportunity to address the Board. She requested additional information concerning the newly-implemented process for payment of annual dues, and was advised that she would be invoiced for the annual dues payment of \$40 in January of 2024. Joy also mentioned to Dale that she will be forwarding her way an e-mailed “new member questionnaire” so that Joy may include information about Dale in the up-coming edition of the Guild’s newsletter. Duncan noted that the questionnaire to which Joy is referring is different than the e-mail he sent her concerning how Dale might work with him to prepare and post a personal page on the Guild’s website.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next **Board of Directors meeting** is scheduled for Thursday, December 28, 2023 at 6:30 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) and Secretary Donna Beumler (dmbaumler@gmail.com) at least 10 days prior to the next meeting (no later than December 18, 2023). The final agenda will be emailed to the full membership five days prior to the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted this 13th day of December, 2023.

By: ___Donna Beumler_____
Donna Beumler
Secretary, Hawaii Writers Guild