

Minutes of the BRAA Board Meeting 7/10/07

Location: Blacksburg Library

Present: Larry Mitchell, Leslye Bloom, Jessica Wirgau, Suzanne Oliver, Toni Bowman, Mary Montgomery, and guest speaker Andy Morikawa.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by President Larry Mitchell.

Larry discussed the agenda and noticed that item # 6 (Accountant Support for the Treasurer and Membership Officers) should be put under item #7 (Old Business) since it was discussed in last months meeting. With that, item #7 would become #6 with #8 becoming #7 and #9 becoming #8. A motion was made by Toni to accept the agenda as modified; it was seconded by Jessica- approved unanimously.

The minutes from last months board meeting were approved.

Jessica Wirgau introduced our guest speaker Andy Morikawa, Deputy Director of the Community Foundation who gave us a framework of how non-profit organizations can work.

Andy gave a brief history of his experience with non profit organizations. He said he senses BRAA is at a juncture with our organization and gave us several ideas of what and how we might want to change. We need a way to look at something that is complex but in a way that makes it more comprehensive.

During his talk, Andy put up a wall chart explaining how they work at The Community Foundation (see enclosure Leslye has made.) He explained how the chart (divided into 4 areas) defines the board's roles and processes with a resulting organizational system that meets its own need as well as the needs of the public. After his talk, we had a brief open discussion.

Jessica, who has sat in on The Community Foundation board meetings, said that what is interesting is the sense of respect for everyone in the room. Each person has the same amount of standing in the organization and it makes a person want to be part of the system- it invites a continuous movement.

Leslye questioned how we can do this within our organization. She suggested drawing up our own charts to see where we are, where we want to go and how to get there. One of the main things we must do is get people to feel as though they matter. They must know everyone has a voice and there aren't one or two people at the top telling everyone what to do. There needs to be lots of trust and respect.

Larry asked about the staff. Andy is full time and has a half time assistant and another helper for a total of 2 ½ paid people. The Community Foundation funds projects instead of doing projects and so is quite different from BRAA. Andy said it was the committees that actually run the foundation.

After Andy left, we had a short meeting about what we really want within our group. We need to figure out how we define success. What is it? What is it that we want to do? How do we build a structure that will meet the continuous need and goals of our organization?

Toni suggested an open meeting of the entire membership with an open forum to find out why people aren't involved. It was discussed that if we want Blacksburg to be an epicenter for the arts in this area it is going to be increasingly essential that we change and be active in the community. We all agreed that there is going to have to be some big changes in our association and how we meet our own needs as well as those of Blacksburg. We discussed doing some questionnaire's not only from the association members but the town as a whole and see what people think needs to be done. What is our vision going to be? How do we adjust from where we are to what we want to be? We need to all be headed in the same direction. We discussed having a general meeting to talk further but no definite plans were made.

Treasurer's Report: no report.

Committee Reports:

- a. Exhibition Venue- no report.
- b. Artist Approval Process for Exhibition update- no report.
- c. Critter show- no report.
- d. New River Arts- Leslye gave a projected budget for the New River Art show along with a summary of awards, timelines and said there are a few more decisions that will be made soon. To enter the show, it will cost \$25.00 for 3 pieces of art. The minimum amount needed for the show is \$2241.00 and she figures the maximum could be \$6325.00. We had about 60 entries two years ago. It still needs to be decided on whether or not to have VT cater or supply the food ourselves. We don't have any other options in that area. The awards are going well. Leslye also handed out a draft calendar for the show. The flyer will reflect all the plans and will be distributed to Pulaski, Jacksonville Center for the Arts in Floyd, and here.

Larry is going to check on a bulk mail postal permit for non profit organizations. We might be able to use one with mailings for the show. We will also have newspaper postings.

- e. Art in the Alley- Larry reported that we have been accepted for our booth even though it is not within their usual format. At this time there are 5 artists who will be showing in the BRAA booth.
- f. Charity Art Policy- no report.

Old Business:

We brought up the Accountant support motion from last month and discussed whether we needed an accountant, or an accounting computer program, or keep things as they are now.

Toni suggested that as a board, we needed to look at our entire program and decide what we should do as a whole and not just with accounting. There are other areas that also need some attention. Toni moved to table the issue until Sue is here and Jessica seconded- motion approved.

New Business:

Jessica wanted to know how we want to move forward with what we have learned from today's presentation. We discussed having an outside facilitator come in and help with an open meeting. Jessica will talk to Andy and get an idea about where to get an outside facilitator and how much it might cost. It was also suggested that we could do it ourselves and then see if we need more help.

Leslye suggested that we talk to people in the community and see what they have to say about the art association. What do they want from us? Do they even know we exist?

Larry wants to find out what our members expect from us as an organization. What do they like? What don't they like? We discussed compiling a survey of the members and what they want and expect. Toni will work on some questions.

Toni asked if the newspapers had gone out. It seems some people still aren't getting them.

Toni also said she would like the board's approval to develop a new membership brochure. She wants it available by November. Leslye made a motion for her to develop a new brochure. Mary seconded it. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Suzanne Oliver, Recording Secretary