Appalachian Women’s Museum

Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 3, 2014

Jarrett House, Dillsboro, NC

Present: Jessie Swigger (presiding), Suzanne MacDowell, Roberta Buckner, Leslie RoJohn, Anne Lane, Tonya Carroll, Pam Meister, Susan Leveille, Claire Collins, Amy Smith, Lisa Potts, Andrew Denson

Visitors: Craig Day (Community Relations, Harrah's Cherokee Casino), Diane Herring, (Sylva Garden Club), Helen Butler (Master Gardener's Club).

Also present: Tim Osment, Calvin Smith, Emma Wertenberger

Meeting called to order by Board President Jessie Swigger, 5:30pm.

A quorum was not present, so no motions could be made or voted upon. The agenda, previous meeting's minutes, and treasurer's report could not be considered for official approval.

The board discussed the items on the agenda and announcements, as outlined below. Jessie indicated that she would email the proposals scheduled for discussion at this meeting to the board. The bylaws allow the board to vote electronically.

Presentation: Master Gardener's Club, Sylva Garden Club

Diane Herring reported that members of the Master Gardener's Club and the Sylva Garden Club are interested in handling the landscaping for the Monteith House. They would work with heritage plants. In order to do this work, however, they would need about three years to propagate the necessary plants, meaning that it would be best to get started now, with the board's approval. They would like to broadcast a call for heritage clippings to the community. Members of the two clubs would catalog the clippings and start to plan the landscaping. They have greenhouse space available for plant propagation. If enough plants were propagated, extras could be sold as a fundraiser for the AWM.

There would be no cost to the AWM. The two clubs would perform this work as a service to the organization and the community.

At this point, they only need the board's approval.

Due to the absence of a quorum, the board could not make a formal motion, but the members present expressed support for this project.

Visitor Introduction

Craig Day, from Harrah's Cherokee Casino Community Relations, introduced himself. He and Jessie have been talking about fundraising and other cooperative efforts.

Inquiry – Board Meeting Attendance

Leslie RoJohn asked whether the board could address the issue of low attendance at board meetings. We cannot change the bylaws immediately, but we can ask for email votes or proxies at future meetings.

Treasurer's Report

Suzanne MacDowell presented the treasurer's report, with copies distributed.

Jessie added that we currently have about $1300 in our IndieGoGo campaign. The organization will keep 6.75 percent once the campaign is over and then transfer the remaining funds to the AWM. This transaction will be reflected in next meeting's treasurer's statement.

Susan Leveille reported that the proposed Jackson County budget now includes $5000 for the AWM. If this is approved, an "anonymous donor" will match that amount. Jessie and the board thanked Roberta Buckner for making this possible.

Committee Reports

Governance (Jessie Swigger, others as noted)

The committee would like to draft a strategic plan. This will facilitate grant writing, since grant applications generally require such a document. The committee will need to do this soon, however, in order to make early autumn grant deadlines. The committee hopes to have a plan written and approved by August 1. Jessie would like to have a July 8 meeting to discuss a draft of the strategic plan. She will send a send a proposal to this effect to the board members via email.

Pam Meister noted that generally strategic plans for non-profits go through a process of focus groups and community meetings. We probably don't have time right now, but, down the road, we should try to go through such a process.

Several community members with substantial grant-writing and non-profit experience have volunteered to write grants for the AWM. Along with the strategic plan, this will allow us to meet the fall grant deadlines.

In a similar vein, Jessie reported that Anne Aldrich, who works in the WCU Provost's Office and is also a graduate student at WCU, has volunteered to help with the AWM's grant to the Cherokee Preservation Foundation.

Jessie informed the group that the WCU Public Relations Office recently filmed Ron Rash at the Monteith property for a promotional film. AWM will receive a small notice in the finished film.

Tim Osment has met with Tuckaseigee Water and Sewer Authority (TWASA) in order to discuss the water and sewer lines at the Monteith House. He has nothing to report at this time, but more information will be coming soon as he continues these discussions.

Jessie met with directors of the ASHEville Museum in Asheville. There is little overlap between their mission and that of the AWM, as the ASHEville Museum will be devoted to human rights on an international scale.

Jessie provided a website update. Denise Drury has had to step away from the AWM website project, but will hand the work off to a colleague at WCU in Creative Services, Zach Keys. Website work will continue and should come in under budget.

Development (Claire Collins and Suzanne MacDowell)

Claire reported that the committee has met and engaged in a wide-ranging discussion of ways to maintain contact and good relations with AWM donors. They discussed possible events at which AWM might have representation: Dillsboro's 125th anniversary (September), Mountain Heritage Day (September), Dillsboro Color Fest (October), and Dillsboro Pottery Festival (November).

Leslie RoJohn suggested a canning competition at the Monteith property, which could provide further visual material at in the canning house and another way to bring in participation.

The committee will continue this conversation and identify a couple of events on which to focus.

Suzanne reported on grant opportunities. The committee has identified five grants with deadlines from Sep 1 to the end of year, mostly for historic preservation projects. The largest is for $20,000. These are the targets for the volunteer grant-writers discussed in the Governance Committee report.

Claire raised the idea of advertising in the WCU "Galaxy of Stars" program.

Monteith House (Calvin Smith)

No new business. Calvin submitted some suggestions for ongoing maintenance work at the Monteith site in his written committee report.

The committee will move forward with organizing new work days, calling on volunteers and board members.

Calvin wants to know if anyone has a chipper they could lend.

Education (Anne Lane)

Anne Lane and Sarah Beth Lee drew up an artifact cataloging form for people who have material they might want to donate to the AWM in the future. Anne will maintain a database on this material. These forms will allow the AWM to keep track of potential material for exhibits and interpretation.

Volunteer (Tonya Carroll)

The committee needs more members. If anyone knows possible volunteers, send their contact information to Tonya.

Community Outreach Sub-Committee (Emma Wertenberger)

Emma suggested that we should have volunteers present at the Monteith property on a regular and predetermined basis to speak with possible donors, additional volunteers, and interested community members. We could publicize their presence ahead of time and show them around the property (excluding the inside of the house, of course). The sub-committee can work with the volunteer and education committees going forward.

New Business and Announcements

Susan Leveille reported that she has been asked to serve on the Jackson County preservation committee, so the AWM now will have a presence on that committee.

Jessie explained that Wendy Meyers's has tendered her resignation from the board for personal reasons. We could not vote on this matter.

Jessie indicated that she will send around an email with the proposals that we did not get to vote on this evening. She encouraged members to vote in favor of the proposal to contract with Tim Osment as a site manager for the Monteith property.

Meeting adjourned 7pm

Next Meeting: July 8, 2014, 6:00 pm, Community Room Jackson County Library

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Denson