

Approved 8/12/17

Minutes, Wisconsin Outdoor Communicators, July 24, 2016

30 members – a modern attendance record -- registered for the annual meeting at Trees for Tomorrow in Eagle River. Many speakers stayed to hear other presentations.

Election:

At the business meeting **officers** were re-elected as follows:

- President—Patrick Durkin
- Vice President/Webmaster – Bob Haase
- Secretary/Treasurer – Laurel Steffes
- Newsletter editor – Patrick Durkin

Note: Members gratefully acknowledged Tom Muench's service as organization treasurer since the inception of WOCA. Tom joined the Board of Directors at the 2016 meeting.

WOCA Board of Directors –

New: Tom Muench. Continuing: Art Barlow, Jerry Kiesow; Bob Wilberscheid; Dave Zeug; Bob Haase; Lisa Gaumnitz, Dave Carlson, Roger Sabota. No board member elections were held; it was agreed board members would continue to serve until/or if they desire to resign or others are interested in serving. We will review annually at the meeting.

Budget:

2016 Treasurer's report was reviewed and approved.

Honorariums for WOCA officers were reconfirmed. Haase, Steffes and Muench declined payments.

Per 2013 minutes, annual officer honorariums are as follows:

- President/annual meeting organizer: \$750
- Prize chair: \$500
- Newsletter editor: \$250
- Vice President: \$100
- Treasurer: \$100
- Secretary \$100

Members were asked to contact and/or write to donors of prizes and auction goods and to thank them for their support of WOCA. Members winning items in the silent auction will receive an email with contact information for the donor. Written thanks are critical in maintaining the interest of donors. Members are urged to note that proceeds from silent auctions to WOCA members fund WOCA's scholarships for emerging outdoor writers.

The auction raised \$2,771 for the treasury. Thanks to donors and bidders!

Other budget business:

- Unanimously agreed to donate \$250 to Trees for Tomorrow and \$100 (annual dues) to the Conservation Hall of Fame.
- Costs incurred by Friday night cooks were reimbursed, per normal practice. Attendance for the shish kabobs and fireman's corn was the highest in memory.
- Tom affirmed the Department of Revenue indicated no fee was due and WOCA is in good standing.
- For the second year in a row, member Jenny Sereno donated \$250 to fund WOCA's scholarship program. Many thanks to Jenn

Minutes: 2015 Minutes were approved.

Other items:

- **Website:** WOCA's website was discussed. It can be found at **W-O-C-A.org** Webmaster Haase reports domain contracts have been renewed for two years. He got us a deal! Normally \$399, he secured a 60% discount, keeping costs at only \$156.92 (for which he will be reimbursed.) The number of member bios is slowly growing. Bob urged members to contribute bios as they give much credibility to the website. Volunteer FB page editors are encouraged to step forward.
- **2017 Conference: Members by acclamation selected August 11-13 at Trees for Tomorrow for next year's annual conference.** Secretary Laurel Steffes, who handled reservations for the conference, noted that Trees provided two cabins (Pine and Hemlock dorms) for housing, relieving the uncomfortable crowding experienced of 2015. Steffes agreed to handle reservations in 2016 and asked Trees to again provide two cabins next year. Pat also suggested that starting with the 2017 conference we set dates two years in advance.
- **Scholarships:** Laurel Steffes, Art Barlow and Bob Wilberscheid reported on WOCA's first scholarship award. The winner was unavailable for the conference; she is in Alaska on a research project. The winner was Theresa Soley, a Marquette graduate student from Milwaukee, who is already well published in outdoor subjects. Sadly, WOCA received only one application – though we got a good one – for the scholarship. This may be a combination of the scholarship being new, and being small by today's standards: Undergraduate tuition at UW-Madison is \$11,000 a year and at Marquette is \$38,000 a year. Steffes recommended WOCA modify its scholarship offering from two \$500 scholarships to one \$1,500 scholarship. She noted this can be accomplished with little increased pressure on the treasury: Mark LaBarbara confirmed the Outdoor Heritage Center will again contribute \$500; WOCA committed \$500; Member Jenny Sereno donated \$250; and Treasurer Muench, Vice President Haase, and Secretary Steffes have again declined honorariums, funding the balance. The proposal was moved by Bob Wilberscheid and seconded by Roger Vander Logt and approved. The scholarship

materials will be updated by the committee and forwarded to schools early this fall.

- **Potential sponsor: Toyota** contacted President Durkin offering to fund WOCA meals or other expenses to support the group. Pat solicited ideas and the members agreed meals were not a funding issue. Members recommended Pat approach Toyota about funding a second WOCA scholarship. Pat will do that and also suggest Toyota become a sponsor member (\$50/yr.) Toyota provided three \$100 gift cards for Bass Pro Shops for this year's auction.
- **Member honored:** Members honored **Tom Muench** for his treasurer service to WOCA, and appointed him to the Board of Directors.
- **Freelancer discussion:** There was a discussion about submitting articles to the Wisconsin **OutdoorsSportsman** magazine, with some members noting they had been promised payment averaging \$100, but the publication did not forward payment and does not appear to be paying for articles any more.
- **Art Barlow presented a possible program for WOCA:** Outdoor Writers of Kansas presented \$1,000 to establish a statewide **program to provide hunting and fishing licenses for disabled veterans**. Once established, the state provided an avenue for individuals and organizations to contribute to the account. The account in Kansas is handled by the state hunting and fishing license agency. There was much discussion about how state government budgets could handle this – whether the Legislature would have to formally establish such an account. Art agreed to research it further. Members encouraged him to flesh out the idea – and research any potential legislative or accounting roadblocks –for WOCA to pursue.
- **Thanks:** Members thanked **Ed Culhane** and **Lisa Gaumnitz** for a great Friday night cookout.
- **Group photo:** A group photo was taken at lunch.

*Laurel Steffes, Secretary/Treasurer
August 2016*