

General Membership Meeting
Houston minutes
Members meetings March 11 and March 13, 2010

The general membership meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM. The quorum was attained with 78 members in the room.

President Harlan Butt welcomed everyone to the meeting. At his request, everyone on the Board of Directors introduced themselves and indicated what areas they work in.

President Harlan Butt introduced the Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC) Chair, Billie Jean Theide. Theide showed a Powerpoint presentation introducing the candidate running for President, Sue Amendolara, the three candidates running for the two open positions on the Board of Directors, Eliana Arenas, Lorena Lazard and Jamie Obermeier, and the candidate running for the open position on the Nominations & Elections Committee, Courtney Starrett. Theide then spoke about the measures on the ballot, which would revise SNAG's Constitution and By-Laws. Voting times were announced and Theide urged the audience to vote.

The Treasurers Report was presented to the membership by Treasurer Stewart Thomson after copies of the 2009 Financial Report were distributed. The 2009 fiscal year ended with a surplus. This news was warmly received by the membership. Financial success in 2009 was due to several concurrent factors: a strong conference in Philadelphia with solid sponsorship, consistent membership and subscription numbers, and several grants. Thomson walked the audience through various charts and comparisons, and announced that the Reserves still need to be built back up on an annual basis.

Michele Pajak-Reynolds asked "Even though we ended up with a surplus, it looks like we went over-budget in a lot of areas in the budget. Why are we consistently over-budget?" She pointed to several examples in the report that had been distributed. Thomson addressed her question, explaining the month-by-month review of SNAG's financial statements, and how the Board makes mid-course corrections. Executive Director Dana Singer also mentioned that grants cover some expenses but the direct connection between those line items is not apparent from looking at the financial report.

President Harlan Butt addressed the assembly, pointing out that the speaker compensation motion made at the Philadelphia membership meeting last May would be brought to the floor again on Saturday.

The General Membership Meeting was adjourned.

Saturday, March 13, 2010, President Harlan Butt called the Second General Membership Meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Initially, a quorum was not obtained, however members continued to walk in, and a quorum of 80 members was attained.

Executive Director Dana Singer made her report to the membership. Singer reported how the troubled economy has brought people and organizations together in mutually beneficial partnerships, and she walked through a list of many partnerships SNAG has forged with others and how they have benefited SNAG. Singer also thanked John and Corliss Rose and Media Enterprises for all the hours of work they are donating for the new SNAG website, scheduled to launch on June 1st.

Editorial Advisory Committee Board Liaison Sandie Zilker made her report. Zilker promoted the 2010 Exhibition in Print with guest curated by Garth Clark. Zilker also recognized Suzanne Ramljak for her work on the magazine, and mentioned the *Metalsmith* Feedback Session from the day before, welcoming feedback from all members and subscribers.

Conference Board Liaison Anne Mondro presented her report on conferences. The 2011 conference will be in Seattle, next May. The conference in 2012 has been moved to Phoenix, and the 2013 conference will be in Toronto, Canada.

Past-President Donald Friedlich asked for a status report on exhibitions. Exhibitions Board Liaison Caroline Gore reported on the application SNAG made to ExhibitsUSA for "Drawn on Paper," curated by Rosanne Raab and Linda Ross. Gore also addressed the exhibition of South African Art Jewelry, curated by Lauren Kalman and Carinne Terreblanche, which is about to open in the United States at the Metal Museum.

President Harlan Butt asked if there was any unfinished business.

Past-President Donald Friedlich made a motion: "The conference co-chairs shall be allowed the freedom to change the honoraria in the speaker budget as they see fit."

Seconded by Past-President Tim McCreight.

Gabriel Craig made a friendly amendment: to add "without exceeding their allotted overall speaker budget."

Amendment agreed to by Past-President Donald Friedlich.

President Harlan Butt called for discussion.

Houston Conference Co-Chair Diane Falkenhagen spoke against the motion, saying that it would create inconsistencies between speakers and create ill will. Falkenhagen also believed that such policy decisions, with budgetary implications, should not be made in membership meetings with so few members in attendance.

Bruce Metcalf also spoke out against the motion. Metcalf believed the problem with motions at membership meetings is that they become policy until members change their mind tying the Board's hands. Metcalf stated that members need to trust the Board and believe that they are working hard to serve the organization well.

Jim Cohen, past Board member, asked for this motion to be placed into context, how did it first arise? Anne Mondro, Conference Board Liaison, explained and placed the motion in context of the entire package that SNAG provides to the conference speakers. Cohen asked if the motion affects anything other than the honorarium. Mondro answered "no."

Paul McClure [co-chair in 2013] asked if the co-chairs can supplement the budget to add to the honoraria? Executive Director Dana Singer answered "No. The amount of the honorarium remains consistent year to year, and cannot fluctuate based on the local co-chairs and the host city."

Angela Gleason asked if the Board could change this policy if it wanted to? President Harlan Butt answered, "Yes, however, currently the Board's position is consistent with the current policy and practice."

Melanie Egan [co-chair in 2013] spoke about her institution where they have standard fees that they must pay across the board. Egan is concerned about her reputation with people who do business with her generally and those who would be speakers at the SNAG conference, being paid differently. Executive Director Dana Singer responded by stating that SNAG cannot change the honoraria year to year based on the business practices of the local host. She suggested that Egan be clear in her preparation for the 2013 conference, stating that the honoraria amount is SNAG's policy, not her institution's.

Melanie Egan then asked how the fees set and have they been raised in the recent past. Executive Director Dana Singer responded by stating that what has been allocated in the budget to the speakers as compensation has increased

recently, with every speaker now receiving a single room. The Board chose to place the increase there rather than to increase the honorarium and retain double occupancy for the speakers.

Irene Pierce reminded the floor that speakers can choose whether to accept SNAG's offer, or not.

Brigid O'Hanrahan stated that raising the honorarium paid to some speakers means paying others less. O'Hanrahan felt that making those distinctions and changing the current policy to allow for this possibility did not seem fair.

Past-President Donald Friedlich spoke to his involvement within the Seattle conference. Friedlich stated that this issue came up in conversations regarding the Seattle conference. They wanted to pay a local speaker an honorarium in the amount of everything SNAG would have paid for her airfare, hotel and honorarium. Friedlich stated that the honorarium amount has not changed since the 1990's. Friedlich feels that our entire field is low, which he feels is embarrassing.

If the motion is rejected, Friedlich asks the Board, as finances allow, to increase the honorarium to at least \$500 per person, and to find a more flexible structure, which might allow for more creative solutions. Friedlich also mentioned that he wouldn't want the hosts to have to negotiate individual contracts with speakers, because it's too awkward for them to navigate.

Bryan Park asked for clarification that there was nothing that could prevent the Board from changing this policy, if the circumstances outlined by Friedlich came up? Conference Board Liaison Anne Mondro responded that this was correct. Mondro then noted that as a general proposition it's better to change the overall policy than to carve out exceptions year by year.

President Harlan Butt called the question.

Vote: The motion failed by a large margin (no one voted yes).

The meeting was opened for new business.

Gabriel Craig made a motion that SNAG create a permanent volunteer position whose responsibility is to compile and disseminate information about the products and services related to the ethical production of jewelry and metalsmithing. Michael Bernard seconded.

Past-President Don Friedlich offered a friendly amendment: to not create a permanent position, instead establish it for a five-year period.

Craig accepted the friendly amendment.

Diane Falkenhagen asked, "Didn't the membership just vote against certain motions being made in a membership meeting—those that have any budgetary impact?" Friedlich replied that this motion does not have any budgetary impact.

Board Member Nanz Aalund asked Craig to clarify what he means by "ethical"? How far does that extend? Craig answered that he was referring to resources gained in an ethical manner.

Michelle Pajak-Reynolds, Volunteer Coordinator for SNAG, reminded the floor that there are no term limits applied to volunteer positions. Pajak-Reynolds then asked the floor "Why is this vote necessary?" Craig responded by stating his intention as being to force the organization to inform its members in this area.

Executive Director Dana Singer explained why this information was not disseminated earlier, when Craig did preliminary research: (1) problems with the methodology and compilation, absence of standards, and (2) the fact that Ethical Metalsmiths announced that they were undertaking this project and there was no reason to overlap resources.

Past-President Tim McCreight stated that he was concerned about this conversation. McCreight stated that there are many mechanisms in place within SNAG other than motions at the General Membership Meeting for making things happen. McCreight urged all present to please talk to the Board first.

President Harlan Butt called the question. In favor: 26. Again: 35. Motion defeated.

Past-President Don Friedlich moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mark Ramsour. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.