

Date: Fri, 13 Dec 2002 16:39:13 -0800  
Subject: Re: BOT, AGM Meetings at NAFOW  
To: ellis@██████████  
From: "Lynn Owens-Whalen" <lowens-whalen@ri██████████>

*Lynn Owens  
Whalen*

ellis@gustavus.edu writes:

>Lynn:  
>Thanks for asking if I had any thoughts about the suggestion of Martha and  
>Berwyn to have a BOT meeting earlier than Friday. Yes, I do have a  
>response to not only their suggestion but the overall scheme of meetings  
>of  
>the BOT during the National.  
>Up until Jack Lewis became president, the schedule was--Executive  
>Committee  
>on Friday morning, BOT on Friday afternoon, AGM on Saturday morning, and  
>New BOT on Sunday morning. Under Jack's administration, because some  
>reports were being presented three times, the schedule was changed to be  
>BOT on Friday morning (thus freeing up Friday afternoon), AGM on Saturday  
>morning, and New BOT on Sunday morning.

>Then the New BOT meeting began to expand to include items not concluded at  
>the Friday BOT meeting until it became way too long for the time  
>available.

> Soooo, two years ago, a decision was made to change the new BOT meeting  
>to  
>immediately follow the AGM. In my opinion, having the New BOT meeting  
>following the AGM has been a disaster from several points of view.  
>First of all, it is a meeting at which new trustees are introduced to the  
>governance structure of WNGGA--the Board of Trustees. Each of them as  
>well.

>as all the "older" trustees are at the meeting having been selected out of  
>2,700 plus persons to be the governance body.

>The meetings the last two years have happened so quickly after the AGM  
>that

>there has not been time to properly conclude items from AGM and as a  
>result, there has been a aura of chaos and disorganization about the  
>meeting--not at all a very positive impression to new people.

>There needs to be a time after the AGM when the AGM items can be properly  
>completed. For example, I came back from Harrisburg with what file items  
>I

>had on hand in complete disarray. I have worked with Joan Mandry on the  
>Minutes and we have gotten those done but each set has items to be placed  
>on file with the official Minutes--where are those things?

>Second, the New BOT meeting should be very strictly limited to election of  
>officers and/or recognition of new trustees, a brief inaugural statement  
>by

>the president or new president, a summary of needed items for committees,  
>and designation of persons to serve on the committees. Absolutely no old  
>business should be brought forward from the Friday BOT meeting. Anything  
>not finished on Friday should be forwarded to the new Executive  
>Committee--not the New BOT meeting.

I really like this idea. It could be, however, that the BOT may refer the  
item to  
the new BOT. Sometimes this is appropriate.

>  
>Third, at the New BOT meeting, a date should be set for a face-to-face  
>meeting of the Executive Committee late in October to spend at least one  
>day going over plans for the organization. The meeting would be limited  
>to

>just 7 persons--the six members of the executive committee and the  
>Executive Director. Later this spring I will be working with Huw on the  
>proposed budget for next year and I am going to strongly suggest that  
>funds

>be allocated to support members of the Executive Committee to meet for a  
>weekend face-to-face in late October.

I don't know about this ..... but I will think on it. I know what you are  
saying.

But we have a strategic planning committee who should be doing this .... ie what are the short term and long term goals of the WNGGA. I wouldn't want to take this away from the BOT who are on this committee. Also, we are in a crunch time financially now ..... perhaps not in the future with the new plans for the NAFW. But I just don't see how we can afford it. I don't

mean't sound pessimistic but I wonder about defeating an otherwise good idea because of timing. Perhaps this isn't the time. We will talk .....

>  
>Fourth, Lynn, I was really embarrassed, extremely disappointed, and >appalled by the way the installation ceremony was handled. There was no >attempt to really make it a classy event. You, Lynn, are the only person >out of 2,700 persons in the organization worldwide to be elected to the >top

>spot in the organization--that of International President. And, yet, you >were treated so informally and the ceremony was so sloppily done that the >new trustees couldn't help but feel that we really don't need to take our >responsibilities seriously. My goodness, this is the "creme de la creme" >of the leaders in WNGGA. If the Board and its officers don't take it >seriously, why should anyone else?

You know, I guess I figured that I would take Harrisburg with a grain of salt right from the beginning. I knew I was right at the opening ceremony when they didn't even plan to introduce the Pres of the WNGGA ! Alan had to tell them to introduce him. Also at the ceremony, everyone else was given

a gift ..... the President of the WNGGA nothing. That pretty much confirmed

my early impressions of the Harrisburg group. I too was not impressed either personally or on behalf of the WNGGA as an organization. The financial

stuff is simply more of the same to me ! So, I agree heartily. This certainly will not happen in Richmond ! The WNGGA is front and centre but then we control it now don't we ? A great, great decision.

>  
>While I'm on the topic of recognition, if I understand correctly from my >notes, there is no plan for a head table at the banquet in Richmond. Why >not?

Several reasons I guess. First, the venue is in B.C. and the west coast atmosphere

is not formal. So, consistent with the BBQ etc., we are trying to create a

feeling of informality but still dignify individuals and organizations.

We

chose to have BOT tables near the 'podium'; and the WNGGA will be represented

at the podium with hosting the evening. There is no 'compiere' ! So, we do have

an opportunity to highlight the 'positions' that you list at the podium.

I agree

that it is only respectful for people to stand when they are introduced, including

the BOT. I hope too that we can be successful in having them seated together. The

last few years, we have been off in some corner.

Second, it simply helps us to get more bodies into the room ..... more tables and more

chairs and more dinners and more profit. We want bucks !

>

>This is the place where the members of the organization have a chance to >see in person those who are involved with leadership responsibilities of >the organization. To put the president, executive director, chairman of >the local committee "down among the troops" is degrading to say the least.

>And, while I'm at it, a real pet peeve of mine is that when persons are >introduced at the head table, it is really tacky if the people being >introduced don't stand to be recognized for the position which they hold.

>They may cringe at being personally singled out but they are being

>identified not because of their personal situation but because of the

>office which they hold.

>

>The Harrisburg Head Table situation was atrocious. Alan was not  
>introduced  
>and he should have been--he was the International President and there were  
>hundreds in the audience who didn't know who he was and the opportunity  
>for  
>them to see who their leader was, was lost.

Agreed ..... but then this was consistent with the rest of the weekend.

To follow that

through .....I have not been contacted at all about Harrisburg including  
the financial

fiasco. I emailed Dic, asked a question and got a brief accounting of how  
they stood

to lose money. I emailed back and asked if there was flexibility with the  
artists ?

I have not heard one word. I find this highly disrespectful not to say  
irresponsible.

But then, I am not remotely surprised.

>

>My strong suggestion is that the New BOT should be on Sunday morning with  
>a

>photographer present to take appropriate pictures of the new Board members  
>and every other year of the new officers. In fact it would be a great

>time

>to have a group picture of the entire Board. That is what classy

>organizations do.

If we have a short meeting on Sunday morning, then it is non business

..... a

get to know one another which is a great idea ..... and picture. What  
about

going back to breakfast ? But NOT at 7am. That simply killed people's  
enthusiasm not to say their ability to really enjoy.

>

>Fifth, it seems to me that Thursday should be reserved for BOT committees

>to meet. This worked out very well in Harrisburg--the 2004 committee met

>on Thursday morning and we accomplished a tremendous amount in the short

>time we had together.

I like this.

>

>Sixth, in planning the agendas for the Friday BOT, it seems to me that

>long

>reports should be curtailed to one page or less and that the committees

>indicate which one (repeat, which ONE) item they want the Board to

>consider. If we are going to have all these committees, perhaps they will

>accomplish something if they were to be told that they need to present ONE

>(repeat ONE) recommendation for the Board to consider. This will speed up

>the meeting considerably and if there are items that are not concluded,

>they should be referred to the Executive Committee--not the New BOT

>meeting.

Absolutely on the one page idea although there are always a few

extraordinary

exceptions. Great ideas here.

>

>In your note you indicated that you and Alan will be extremely busy on  
>Wednesday and Thursday before the NAFOW. You are absolutely correct.

>Detailed planning for any event is a procedure to cut the last minute

>glitches to an absolute minimum but there will be last minute glitches

>which need to be taken care of as soon as possible.

I figured that ! Who knows what is going to happen at the last minute. I

have anticipated that I will be doing the WNGGA venue committee things

up to Thursday afternoon and then I will flip over to WNGGA President.

So, I already have two volunteers who you met to take what would be

my responsibilities as a venue person during the actual festival. We will

add two others as time goes on.

>

>A further complication if you want to call it that is that the new

>Executive Director will be present and trying to get a feel for the way  
>the  
>NAFOW event runs. If we follow the schedule given above, I'll be able to  
>better orient that person to each of the meetings.  
That would be great. A very wise suggestion.

>  
>My suggestion for your response to Martha and Berwyn is that Thursday is  
>being held open for meetings of BOT committees--particularly the 2004  
>Planning Committee but that their suggestion can be brought up at the  
>Stratford meeting on April 26.  
We could or we could simply say that we are going to go with:  
Thursday ..... committees  
Friday 8am or at the latest 8:30am BOT  
Let's get it done earlier. Then the BOT can enjoy the rest of the day.  
Saturday 9 am - AGM  
Sunday 8:30 am new BOT breakfast ..... can we afford this ? I think it  
would be a good way to start the new term.

>  
>Sorry for the length of this note but my frustration over Harrisburg has  
>been below the surface long enough.  
I can certainly understand that. You have taken a lot from Harrisburg and  
Alan had no picnic either. I am so glad that the WNGGA now has total  
control  
over the NAFW. It ranks right up there with one of the wisest decisions  
that  
the BOT ever made !

>You have my full confidence and  
>support, Lynn, in your work as President. It is a tough job but you have  
>the experience and wisdom to choose the right course in each of the  
>challenges you face. I hope I have not made your job any more difficult  
>but I am almost a "lame duck" person and want to provide as smooth a  
>transition to the new Headquarters administration as possible  
I know that you are always there for me. You always have been. I just  
hope  
that I reciprocate in the same way that you are supportive in all that I  
do.

I am sure that you know that the last thing that comes to mind when I  
think of  
you is 'lame duck' ! No way ! Your advice is always welcome and highly  
regarded.  
You are a friend, a confidant and a wonderful mentor. And Ellis, I won't  
be letting  
you off the hook for that anytime ! Got to get that straight !  
> The chaos  
>which I went through at Harrisburg should not be repeated.  
Not a chance. Alan and I told one another a long time ago that  
Richmond/Vancouver  
would be nothing but a pleasure for you. Hope that it is so far.

>  
> Ellis J.  
Let me know your thoughts about the 'schedule' that I suggested ..... and  
other items.  
I am looking forward to listening to your take.

>  
>On the health front--I head back to Mayo Clinic Rochester for tests--my  
>weight has dropped about 14 pounds although my blood sugar count is well  
>under control. I have just received within the last couple days a further  
>notice from the Clinic that they want me to undergo a complete physical in  
>mid-January. I will keep you posted if there are any serious medical  
>complications.  
All the best. You have had some better news lately so let's go with some  
more !  
Please let me know.  
>Greetings to your folks (Janet and I sent a special  
>Anniversary card to them) and to Wilf and the puppies!  
Wonderful. They will really appreciate that.  
Goint to the Vancouver Welsh Mens' Choir Christmas concert this evening.

Date: Tue, 17 Dec 2002 09:51:57 -0800  
Subject: Re: 2005, 2006, 2007 Plans  
To: ellis@  
From: "Lynn Owens-Whalen" <lowens-whalen@diamond.sd38.bc.ca>

ellis@gustavus.edu writes:

>Lynn:

>Thanks for note. With regard to the plans for 2005, 2006, and 2007, is it  
>the Strategic Planning committee that is working on those?

Yes, 2005 at least Alan is. ( note below ). Right now they are setting a  
framework

of expectations for the North American Festival of Wales .... a blueprint  
if you like.

So, they will make recommendations at Stratford re: the relationship  
between the

WNGGA venue committee and the BOT of the WNGGA, expectations about  
activities,

expectations about purpose etc. It may be that the committee can then  
shrink to

include a Chair, Executive Director and one other Board Member (who is on  
the

WNGGA venue committee) to be the liaison with the BOT in the future. No  
need for

a cast of thousands at that point. I have not shared this with anyone  
else than Alan

at this point but it will be obvious and overt at Stratford. A major  
focus of the

next couple of years will be to establish 'traditions', 'habits',  
expectations for

future NAFW.

>I will be at

>the Religious Conference Management Association Convention in late January

>and can establish contacts with convention and visitors bureaus for the

>committee or whoever is to be the Board "point person."

Where ? In Orlando ?

If you would like to follow up by establishing contacts and facility  
possibilities,

sure. However, I would rather that we considered it a fishing expedition  
at

present as we have no WNGGA people on the ground who are able to organize  
and implement a NAFW in Orlando.

>I do know that Myfanwy Davies has established a contact with Orlando but I

>detected some hesitancy on your part about that when I was out there in

>November. Have you communicated with Myfanwy about that?

I did. However, I am not sure that Myfanwy really understands the basis  
for my

concern. I think it gets back to a notion of functionally how a WNGGA  
Festival of

Wales can be organized and implemented. Myfanwy has in her mind that the  
BOT

does this. I simply cannot see how this is possible. When I suggested a  
model

with BOT members in the area and other WNGGA members in the local area to  
form

the organizing committee, I got the impression that she did not understand  
this concept.

However, I will pursue it with her. I am also concerned that Orlando does  
not have

enough BOT and other WNGGA members living in the vicinity to make up a  
successful

WNGGA venue committee. The Briggs did not express an interest in getting  
involved

and I can understand that. It is not as simple as saying "that is a great  
place to go" because

they have the facilities or whatever. We need to consider going where we  
have the

resourceful, energetic and committed members of the WNGGA who will do the

job

right for the WNGGA. A brand new concept !

Confidentially, you should know that Alan and I have been thinking about Phoenix again.

The first step is to see if the nominating committee can find a candidate for the BOT from

the Phoenix area to replace Myra. If this doesn't happen, we will need to go to plan B.

Keep this under your hat, please.

>

>The reason I am raising the question of 2005, 2006, 2007 is the

>Constitution--Article 13, Section e)--"...four years in advance...." This

>would suggest, it seems to me that the Board needs to decide on those

>years

>at the mid-year Board meeting.

I think this will have to wait to September. I understand the

Constitution but for 2005

I can't see a decision being made until Richmond. Better to be sure than to rush and

make a big mistake. I don't think the Constitution will mind this too much, do you ?

>

> Ellis J.

Talk to you later. Am at work and have to go for a while.

Lynn

To: "Lynn Owens-Whalen" <lowens-wha[REDACTED]>  
From: Ellis Jones <ell[REDACTED]>  
Subject: Re: 2005, 2006, 2007 Plans  
Cc:  
Bcc:  
Attached:

Lynn:

First, an important consideration when choosing sites for the future should be the number of WNGGA members within an area. As of last April, the top six states were: Ohio--474 members (10 AWOs); Pennsylvania--453 (12 AWOs); New York--181 members (10 AWOs); California--179 members (6 AWOs); Minnesota--179 members (3 AWOs); Wisconsin--154 members (4 AWOs). The top two provinces were Ontario--94 members (6 AWOs); and British Columbia--27 members (1 AWO).

Second, in the summer of 2000 I flew to Phoenix to meet with Suzy Hopkins and other members of the Arizona area. We did a site visit; I made a presentation to about 20 people. When I left, all seemed ready to go--just prepare the official letter of invitation for the Board.

Within a month, however, Suzy informed me that the initial enthusiasm had evaporated and the others told her that if she wanted to pursue it, she could but that they would be too busy to help. I was really surprised but didn't press the matter.

To put the NAFOW into a place that doesn't have many WNGGA members to start with might be a bigger challenge than is needed at this early stage of the concept. The enthusiasm of the members is what helps the excitement of the event. With large numbers of members, there is better opportunity for the membership enthusiasm to be contagious. Thus, perhaps Ohio might be a good location for 2005 or 2006. It has been in Ohio 11 times since 1929 but not since 1998 when it was in Columbus. How about Cincinnati--last there in 1991?

In searching for a site for 2003 I did contact Wilkes-Barre but they suggested Scranton might be better because they were in the midst of planning a new convention center. Scranton is only 16 miles from Wilkes-Barre. At the Gymanfa Ganu singing sessions in Wilkes-Barre, there were over 3,000 folks singing at both the afternoon and evening sessions. Wilkes-Barre did have a number of handicaps - mainly the lack of a convention center and a sizable hotel.

According to our records, Harrisburg did have 1,600 in 1995 but based on comments I received after the 2000 event, there was a breakdown in publicity and it drew only drew just over 900 this time with 320 from Pennsylvania.

Ellis J.