

Friends of the Visual Arts  
dba Willamette Art Center  
**Wednesday, February 7, 2024 – 5:30 pm**  
location: IKE Box Café, 299 Cottage Street NE, Salem  
**Board Meeting**  
**Minutes**

**Attendance:**

**Board members:** Carla Axtman, Pam Baldwin, Wendy Cornelisen, Sage Dunham, Dana Field, Claudia Hill, Jennifer Lassen, Dave McConnell, Heather Skinner.

**Staff:** Lisa Joyce.

**Call To Order:** President Sage Dunham at 5:32 pm.

**Secretary's Report:** Claudia Hill

January 2024 minutes were provided for review. Sage **moved to approve the minutes as presented.** Motion seconded and passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Dave McConnell

Umpqua Bank Savings	\$59,917		
Umpqua Bank Checking	\$77,595		
Petty Cash	\$397	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$137,910</b>

**President's Report:**

- Sage expressed appreciation for the committees that met.

**Director's Report:** Lisa Joyce

- Kiln Update: Doug's work on the Susan kiln is an absolute improvement. Nikki will load and fire it tomorrow (Thursday 2/7). The Bailey kiln did not shut off automatically after being fired last week. Contact with the manufacturer is planned. Lisa will provide timely status updates regarding future kiln issues.  
Other Equipment Update: Doug repaired one wheel and is working on another. The pug mill is now working.

**Old Business:**

- Formation of Fundraising Committee.
  - Previous discussions have highlighted the need to identify more revenue streams such as grants, specific sponsorships, events and drives. Carla **moved that we form a Fundraising Committee, which will help identify and pursue potential income streams that can contribute to the growth and well-being of the Art Center.** The motion was seconded and passed.
  - Wendy **moved that we dissolve the Scholarship Committee and shift all responsibilities into the Fundraising Committee.** The motion was seconded and passed.
- Authorization of funds for a member/volunteer party.
  - Jennifer proposed an event to celebrate the people who make the center a vibrant community. The proposal includes open studio access, Raku, food and games for volunteers and members from 2023 and 2024. Certification of volunteers, and a requirement that only certified volunteers operate raku kilns, was suggested. Wendy

moved that we budget \$475 to recognize our volunteers and members at an event to be held March 24th from 4 to 7 pm. The motion was seconded and passed.

### New Business:

- High Volume Artists.
  - Pam delved into WAC board meeting history from 2016 to 2022. She found multiple references in the minutes to high volume artists and special firings that included committee recommendations. This is something that the board has considered repeatedly over the years.
  - Sage identified two perspectives that guide WAC policy: legal and cultural.
    - The legal consideration includes attorney John Gear's advice that the WAC: 1) adhere to our mission; 2) charge at or above market rate for our services; and 3) make a profit on our services. Sage noted that the board assessed this issue as recently as 2022, and (after increasing firing fees) concluded that the WAC does make money on firing, and that firing the work of high-volume artists makes up an important revenue stream for our organization. Discussion regarding the firing costs at surrounding studios was also discussed, and, although based on incomplete information, it seems that the WAC prices are in-line with competitors..
    - The cultural aspect is the perspective and will of the organization to prioritize shelf, kiln, and staff capacity.
    - Details are needed on specific costs of doing business, potential effects on other studios, and who in the community would be affected by policy changes
  - Carla **moved to form a committee to investigate our firing policy as it pertains to high volume artists and draft policy for the board to consider.** Motion seconded and passed.
- Empty Bowls.
  - Dana presented a summary of concerns, operative changes from previous years, and suggested improvements to Empty Bowls. The summary separated various elements of the fundraising process into discrete tasks that share a common aptitude – production, glazing, firing, inventory, marketing, inventory, sales crew, and others. Lisa, as director, would be the liaison to fairgrounds staff, track costs, and provide sponsor and volunteer recognition.
  - Discussion regarding time frame, costs, quality, size of venue and the enhanced role of the director. The Board agreed to reach out to the WAC community for volunteers willing work together to carry out the Empty Bowls fundraiser.
- Open Studio Time.
  - Pam reviewed the history of the WAC studio policy, and board discussions from 2016-2022. Expanding open studio access and classes (especially in the evening) was a recurring topic of discussion over this period. The expanded patronage that resulted from the pandemic period has exacerbated this issue.
  - Discussion ensued, especially around the ideas of having simultaneous open studio and classes, or multiple classes held simultaneously. Lisa and Sage (on behalf of the board) will continue to work on this issue.

### Committee Reports

- Budget. Dave stated the budget committee has met twice to review the budget and will meet again February 15<sup>th</sup>. A balanced budget and proposal will be presented at the March board meeting.

- Strategic Planning. Carla reported the committee reviewed the current Mission Statement, and will revisit this topic at their next meeting. Strategic planning will begin after consensus on the Mission Statement.
- Membership. Jennifer will send out additional information regarding the upcoming March event.
- Marketing/Communication. Lisa and Carla met. Pam on newsletter.
- Safety/Facilities. Dana noted the asphalt ramp outside one of the north-facing doors was slippery with algae and mud where a patron slipped and fell. The area was cleaned and scrubbed but still slippery. Warning sign posted. Multiple health and safety issues were discussed. Development of a maintenance schedule, chemical inventory, and postings for food safety were discussed.
- Personnel. Sage **moved to appoint Claudia to the personnel committee**. Motion seconded and passed.

**Meeting Adjourned at 6:55 pm.**

Submitted by Claudia Hill  
WAC Board Secretary, 2023

Approved

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Sage Dunham, President

**Parking Lot**

- Employee handbook consolidate/update policies procedures.
- Ideas for generating more revenue during the State Fair.

**Calendar**

March 13 -- Next Board Meeting March 13 @ 5:30 pm