

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

MAW Board Minutes 10/24/2019

William appointed Annie as the newsletter editor so that we have a quorum. Board meeting started at 6:40.

In attendance: William Needham, John Harper, Bruce Boyer, Agnes Demianski, Connie Durnan, Mitch Fournet, Rick Silber, Jared Urchek (we called him at 7:08), Annie Greene

I. Minutes

William reviewed 12 September 2019 minutes – need to decide who should be in charge of dealing with the camera and the scope. Rick and Connie think it should be Jared.

II. Reports of Officers

a. Vice- John Harper

John -I want to talk about Meetup and a related issue is yahoo groups. The yahoo group can continue but all the docs and photos will disappear. What should we do about that?

John- the third thing I want to talk about is the Instagram stuff. All of those are related.

William- Yes, communication and outreach needs to be discussed.

b. 2nd Vice- Mitch Fournet – nothing to report.

c. Treasurer- Elizabeth Hargrave - absent

William- Elizbeth did not provide me any financials before she left. There should be a summary budget at the December meeting. At the February meeting the budget is shown and members can request to audit.

John- It sounded like Elizabeth wanted to be off of treasurer.

William- Yes. The slate has changed, Elizabeth is moving to first vice president and Matt will take over as treasurer.

John – In the course of registering and giving refunds for the culinary event, I got access to AffiniPay. There is a process and board members that deal with financial transactions should have access.

William- You mean access to the bank account? That is up to the new treasurer.

John- Do you have access?

William- I don't think I need them. I think one of the principles of running an organization is chain of command. The more people who have access, the less the person responsible can do their job. Seems particularly true for financials. The transition between Elizabeth and Matt should be smooth.

Bruce – I agree with William that we ought to have tight controls over budget items. We have been reducing controls to our budget rather than maintaining them. We don't have an audit so if we allow other people to have access to the funds, we lose control.

William- I agree.

Bruce- Which is why I am asking details on who owns the checkbooks.

d. Secretary- Agnes Demianski – nothing to report.

e. Membership- Rick Silber

Rick- I get vexing inquiries; pay \$20 become a member, pay \$30 bucks it is family, but there are always these exceptions. Are you allowed on a foray if you are not a member?

William- You have to pay a foray fee and sign a waiver.

Rick – Where do they do that?

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

John – It is online.

William- We do need to do something to make it smoother for people.

Connie- When I was foray chair, I did my own thing. Make people happy. If someone comes on a couple of forays though, they should join.

Rick – I made a unilateral decision.

William- My only feeling is that we should encourage them to join.

Annie- If they come on more than two forays a year, it is worth getting a membership.

Jared- There used to be a page on the website under forays where non-members could pay the \$5 fee, but I just clicked on that link and it went to a page not found message.

William- Everybody on the board should know how it works. This ought to be an email for all the members to know.

Connie- Agree, that is a good idea.

John- We do have an FAQ, with a long description.

William- I think it needs a fresh rework.

Rick- If the overarching goal is to make people happy, I can make these decisions.

John- What is your thought of how to deal with the waivers?

Rick- They are not eating.

John- But they are getting stung by bees, and tripping over stuff.

Rick- You can waive someone for negligence by contract, so the question is, what is the likelihood that the club is going to do something on a foray, where someone dies? How would you frame the issue that MAW failed to perform or did not perform. I cannot see how we would be liable.

William- Just look at the foray we ran in prep for the mushroom fair; a tree almost fell on Elizabeth.

Rick- It's an act of nature.

John- You get waivers for everything except gross negligence? We need them to know they are assuming the risk.

Rick- But the risk has to be an unusual risk, beyond normal activities. Higher risk activities need a waiver.

Bruce- We need them for eating mushrooms.

Rick- Agree and I may be completely wrong.

William- It is up to the foray chair.

Mitch- You are talking about common sense. William talked about other clubs, like hiking clubs having them, is that due to the strenuousness?

William- Yes.

Mitch- I don't think we do that. When I was foray chair years and years ago, I thought of a canoeing trip, and we might need a waiver for that.

William- I know where we could do that.

Rick – I can't understand why. I mean if all clubs are doing it?

John- We have a click through waiver that is basically worthless.

Rick- If you do it right, they can be intimidating.

William- I recommend we move on.

John- The conclusion is to leave it to the foray chair whether or not we need to provide waivers for people on the forays who are not members.

Connie – I still recommend we have a sign in sheet.

William- Hiking clubs do that, and they have a disclaimer thing on the top.

Mitch- Even if it is not a waiver, it could have information.

Rick- That is like informed consent.

William- Can we move on?

f. Culinary- VACANT

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

John reported – Gleanings are that \$15 a head may have reduced the amount of participation. Got to only about 30 people. We were short on cooks. My guess is that we took a bit of a loss. Phillips came through with mushrooms. The food was good. Culinary requires some thinking about what we want to accomplish. Can we run this at a loss? I think we need 50 people to break even.

William – A secure facility that works is worth the expense. We used to have it at the library, and then we blew a fuse.

Bruce- Someone used an electric device.

William- If a fire marshal had come in we would have been in trouble. We tried numerous other places. I think John is the right person to sort this out. The person in charge of an area is responsible for running it.

Rick – I think the space is terrific. I know that certain kinds of stoves are okay to use inside. Some generate a certain amount of carbon monoxide.

John – Ours use butane, shouldn't be a problem. I have spent a lot of time trying to find spaces. There are things to work out, but once we have a culinary chair it should work out. I will leave my opinion out unless I am appointed culinary chair.

William- The board position is responsible for that activity. It is their job to run it as they see fit.

g. Programs- Tom McCoy – absent

William- Tom provided a slate for next year. I will put this out at the November meeting. We are pretty well put together for next year. I do think we need to have dates set for culinary earlier. Sequanota is set.

Annie- I do think that may have been a problem with the low attendance at the culinary; the late and changing date; more so than the cost.

William- One of the advantages of having an event at the same venue is that the clientele gets established.

John- Do any of the speakers need housing?

William- We should ask Tom that.

h. Forays- Matt Cohen - absent

i. Newsletter Editor-Annie Greene

Annie- The first newsletter will be published around the same time as the first meeting for next year, around February. I have been in touch with the graphic designer who proposed the Instagram account. She has given me advice on fonts and layouts and she will refresh some of the graphics. There will be no major changes. She had asked for a copy of the logo for some minor changes. I sent her files. Does anyone have pictures of the culinary event?

John- I can send a request to the people who attended.

j. NAMA Trustee – Bruce Boyer- nothing to report.

John- What is NAMA doing about yahoo groups?

Bruce- No idea.

John- There was a proposal to move to Facebook and a bunch of people said no.

III. Unfinished Business

1. Assignment of Assets by board member position

William- I changed it somewhat and Connie added nametags. I decided having one board member would be too restrictive, so for every case I put two.

Mitch- For back up.

William- Not sure if assignments should be primary and secondary or not.

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

Bruce- Why do we need a second person?

William- The goal is the first person is responsible.

Bruce- Make the second person the back up.

William- (went through the items on his list). Trying to solve the problem of how confusing this is.

Bruce- List the responsible position and put the back up in parentheses.

William- I think when we have our first board meeting next year, we will handle this. With the new board it will work out much more logically.

Bruce – I don't have any wax bags. We used them and I turned them over to Matt. I'm not going to be a backup for bags.

William- We don't have voucher slips on here.

Bruce- By foray collection strips, we mean voucher.

2. Archival documents (Fournet August 2019)

William- Several people had boxes. The goal at our last meeting was to consolidate. My box was financial documents. My box has disappeared.

Mitch- My box was old Sequanota stuff.

Connie- I had Sequanota stuff and financials. What we kept is in a box that some people might want to look at. There is a blank survey form about tastings. Someone should go through it.

Mitch- Do we want to archive this digitally?

Connie- Yes, we should scan them.

Bruce- I haven't looked through mine. I might at some point.

William- I'll take a look at Connie's stuff.

John- I have not reviewed mine, but I will.

Bruce – I got guidance on what financial stuff I should keep.

Connie – There are some records on the store we had. I don't remember the name. There are some articles Annie might be interested in. I contacted NAMA about some items and they said they already had them.

3. Hospitality at MAW meetings (Hoyer Oct 2019)

William- Barbara brought this up, and Jennifer. Barbara said it was fine when there were 30 people at a meeting, but when you get 50 to 90 people, how can we manage? I don't think we want to burden anyone with that. I kind of feel like providing food or snacks to such a large group is not trivial.

Rick – At the basketball games I go to for my son, there is always a table selling pizza or whatever.

Connie- I don't think we can do that at the library. I've been to other meetings and most don't have food.

William- I think we are at the point that is similar to our decision to end the MAW library. In the end we may decide this is not our core mission.

Rick – It also drags out the meeting. Without the break for the food, we can move on to the next topic.

William- I keep the meetings in a window from 7 to 9pm. We have the chairs set up fast, and then everyone cleans up fast. It was impressive at the last meeting. I feel like this is the second or third time we've had this discussion.

Connie- If people want to bring something, they can.

Rick- What about the hot water thing?

Connie – That is fine, but Barbara wants people to bring their own cups.

William- Our core mission doesn't suffer one way or the other. We don't want to say we can't but we don't need to mandate it either.

Bruce- What are we going to tell Jennifer?

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

William- We should tell her we don't think it is necessary on a routine basis, but there can be a hospitality event sometimes. At the mushroom fair we do want hospitality for the volunteers. I will make an announcement at the next meeting.

Connie- The people who miss it are the old guard.

William- The disposable cups is one of the big things Barbara hates.

Rick- Are the ones we bought compostable?

John- Yes.

IV. New Business

1. Advertisement of member organized trips (Silber 22 Sep 2019)

William- Rick is leading treks and asked if he could use the MAW newsletter or email list to promote or advertise.

Rick- I started a company with the idea of offering customized treks in the Himalayas. I got this idea to combine hiking and mushrooms. I met a guy who is a PhD trained in Bern Switzerland and he is very excited about doing this. I spoke to Tom Volk too, and he seems interested. So, there could be a research collaboration, who knows. I also tried to get Thomas to think about it. Even if that doesn't happen, I'd like to get ten people to go and look at mushrooms in this part of the world. I'd love to have the ability to advertise to the club, and other clubs. When I go in a week, I will be putting the trip together and fine tuning the itinerary.

William- The question for the board is whether to use MAW as an advertising venue.

Rick – There is an identifiable conflict, so I brought it up.

William- I see zero objections. If mushrooms were not involved, it would be different.

Bruce- What have we done in the past about people advertising in our newsletter?

William- if they are members, it is okay.

Rick- MAW members would get a discount. We will be sharing the profits from the treks equally with the Sherpa guides to balance some of the issues that go on there. There is a climbing center that provides Sherpas with training and 10% of profit goes to that organization.

John- I think this is okay, but it is a different issue when dealing with a board member, so we need to make clear that we do this for any member.

2. Meetup site disposition (Harper/Needham September 2019)

William- We are adding the yahoo topic here too. The larger picture is we have had the Meetup group for about nine years, and the expenses keep going up. So what are the benefits of keeping the meet up site? I was going to lead a Meetup foray, but didn't do that. It is a powerful tool, but it doesn't fit with what we have been doing based on the number of people on forays and the waiver issue. I probably get one to two emails a day, and they say that they joined Meetup. I used to ask people at meetings how they heard of us to try to get some metrics.

John – It is now going to be up to \$200 a year. I have some issues with Meetup. There is lack of transparency to the membership list.

Mitch- On the other hand, those people probably like that.

John- The point is that I have to get waivers from them. That also means I have 400-500 people who have not signed the waiver. When we originally started this, we had open forays. Then we decided only half of the forays should be open. I've also used meet up to register people for forays and then give them a code to pay the \$5. That is cumbersome, but it limits the distribution of our locations. Most of the people on Meetup at this point are not members, but they may be interested in mushrooms. At this stage we are probably not getting a lot of benefit from Meetup. We've always had the link to our website on Meetup. We could close

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

this one down, then open a new one where people can find us, but not take in new members. There is a much lower fee when there are only a few members. I don't really like communicating with people through Meetup, but I like that people can find us there.

Mitch – It is like a \$200 ad.

John- We also have a Facebook group.

Mitch- Is anyone curating that?

Annie – I am now, I think Thomas did before.

John- My first preference would be to shut it down, but send an email to everyone that we have a website where they can become a member and get our emails. We can take 2000 members on Wild Apricot.

Connie- I am getting something on Facebook that sounds like Meetup. Something to consider.

John- I expect we could use that.

Annie – This will also be talked about during the Instagram proposal?

William- We started this before we had a good web site. Now we are using it for advertising. I agree with John, that this is for people who are vaguely interested in mushrooms, but they conflate Meetup with MAW. I think at this point it defeats our purpose. I think we should write to everyone on the list letting them know we will terminate this. The second idea is to have a MAWDC Meetup site. I don't see the point of that. Isn't that what the internet is for?

Bruce- I move that we cancel Meetup and send an email asking them to join MAW.

William- I would say that this may not be our call. John started this without board input.

John- MAW has been funding this, so I am happy to take direction on this. It is not serving much of a function beyond advertising. I would second Bruce's proposal.

All voted in favor.

John- Or someone else could take over the site.

William- No.

John- I also had a MAW cooking lab that would be only MAW members, but I think we can do that through our website too.

William- I think that should be part of the culinary committee.

3. Mycoflora funding and board positions (Fournet/Needham September 2019)

William- Two questions, one is to make the Mycoflora chair a board position. The other issue is that Mycoflora funding is running out. Third, I would like Jared to give a presentation about our recent sequencing success.

Jared- In terms of the board position, I am nominated as second VP, so may not need to be addressed at the moment.

William- I agree.

Jared- In terms of funding, I have not heard back from Mycoflora. I have sent a couple of emails to a couple of people. I will send another email. I am not sure who was interacting with them before to send them the original funding.

Bruce- I initiated it and Elizabeth sent it in. How many samples have we submitted.

Jared- We have submitted 18.

Mitch – They raised the price.

Bruce- I guess we don't have an option to argue. I think we ought to proceed.

Mitch- It is \$30 per sample now.

Bruce- We think they have our money, so we should proceed.

Jared- I talked to Trey Richards and he is the only person I have been able to connect with, and he did not have a good answer.

Mitch- Have you spoken to Martin?

Jared- No.

Mitch- Apparently Martin had already started an account when I went in to set up an account.

Jared- I have been emailing Steve Russel.

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

Mitch- It may have been Steve who I talked to as well.

John- Bill was engaged in fundraising and he reached out to me.

Jared- I'll add him to the email.

John- It is not clear what his role is now.

Jared- I think Steve Russel took over as president

Bruce- We also have another \$500 that we have not allocated for this year.

William- Correct. The treasurer is not here, we will do a budget review and discuss future funding next year.

Bruce- So as a club we have submitted at least three requests for projects.

Jared- Yes, you opened the Sequanota project.

William- And there was one for Shenandoah.

Mitch- And I opened one.

Bruce- Mitch's is for the DC area.

William- Jared, can you talk about the results we have? Only for ten minutes, but if you have pictures that would be great.

Jared- Yeah, I can do that.

William- Did the Inocybe mushroom get sequenced?

Jared- That was not sent in. There was a box of samples that I could not find, but I have those now.

Jared- There is a Mycoflora work party scheduled for Sunday and then we can do a little foray.

John- I can come too. Is there a Mycoflora website?

Mitch- Yes.

John- I thought this was being funded by National Geographic?

Jared- The Mycoblitz? yeah, and there is a short window where any club can send in samples to Mycoflora.

4. Instagram Proposal (Harper 15 October 2019)

William- Let's talk about social media. Whenever you go to any website, there are little icons to lots of social media sites. We have a proposal from Lita, the graphic designer. I wasn't sure what she wanted. Do we provide funding?

Annie- She just wants permission to start an account. It is free.

William- There is nothing wrong with going with Instagram. Since the newsletter editor is the media board member, it seems like we would have that as a board function.

Mitch- I don't think you can twist someone's arm to do Facebook if they aren't already on it.

Annie- There are ways to integrate all these things. You go to one website/platform and you can create a post that blasts multiple platforms. That is what companies are doing. Whether that is my role as newsletter, or if that is for someone else is unclear.

William- We just reigned in our Meetup, so whatever we do we should link all these things to the website.

Annie- From the other direction, from social media, we link to our website too.

Mitch- If we are saving \$200 on Meetup, we could use that money for one of these platforms that blasts to all the social media sites.

Agnes- Naming mushrooms from pictures is an issue for MAW. We have to be sure of IDs.

Bruce- I don't think we should get identifiers identifying pictures.

Mitch- There should be a statement that you should not eat this. I look at a lot of pictures from the poison center. I don't think it is a problem to put a name on mushroom pictures.

Bruce- We can put names on mushroom pictures, but shouldn't be identifier's job.

Agnes- I don't think we should put names on mushrooms if we don't know what they are.

John- The Instagram account seems high maintenance. If Lita leaves, someone has to take over. Would members be able to post?

Annie- Lita would be the only one that can post.

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

Agnes- So people would send pictures to Lita and she would be the gate keeper.

William- She can ask board members to vet images. I think this is good. I got the proposal through info@mawdc. I will respond to her. I move that we open an Instagram account.

Agnes- I second.

All agree.

William- We as a committee will help with picture selection, identifying, and captions.

Bruce- I recommend that this be part of the newsletter editor's job to manage.

William- Yes, I agree.

John- Who is our web master?

William- Tom.

5. Log Demo at Derwood (Needham 19 October)

William- I have been representing MAW at numerous events, including log demos. Grow it Eat it in Derwood is asking for a workshop about cultivating mushrooms. It is May 2nd in Derwood. I will do this, just letting you know.

6. Tchotchkes (Durnan coasters and Needham "mushy shroom" 19 October)

William- I wrote to the American Mushroom Institute for the MAW Mushroom Fair and got this bag of plush mushrooms toys. I proposed that we use these as gifts for the culinary event. I think the culinary chair should give these as swag.

Connie- Carl Epstein has a company called Free Country Designs. He sent me some coasters (4 sets) as a donation to the club. I will contact Elizabeth to send him a thank you for the donation.

William- Those also seem like culinary type things. Could incentivize the cooks.

John- We should show these and say that people can buy these.

William- We have T-shirts on our web sites. These are attractive. Could these be on our web site?

Rick – We could sell lots of things.

Connie- We'd have to get Carl's permission.

William- We should bring this to Elizabeth's attention. We don't sell things for profit. Connie, can you email him about this? We could have our logo on them.

7. Wheaton Library and Community Center (Durnan – 23 October)

Connie- Wheaton has finally opened their new library and community center. Someone should check this out for meetings as we grow.

Annie- Or culinary events?

Connie- I don't know. I drove by.

Rick – It doesn't seem like we need to do that.

Connie – Just to check, as a backup.

William- We are getting close to needing more room for meetings. They may not offer a cooking room.

Connie – I don't know their hours, but if there is a community center, that may be open later.

William – John and I will look at it.

8. Sequanota billing issues (McCoy/Durnan – 23 October)

William- There was some question from Tom about different charges for camping. We were billed more for numerous services than we had expected. It is also under new management.

We have a good relationship with them, do we really want to argue?

Mitch- People did sleep in rooms and used the showers.

Board Meeting Agenda Thursday, 24 October 2019

Connie- They did double the fee for camping. We know what the room charges are, but the camping wasn't listed. They didn't use to charge us for things like use of room showers by campers.

Bruce- I'd like to know what the total impact is.

Connie- I did not register a complaint.

William- I will respond and copy the board, letting him know we want to know the total charge and that we will pay, but that we need clarification of charges for the future. Our experience at Sequanota for 20+ years, is also why we should stick with the same venue for culinary.

Annie- Decrease the number of variables, makes sense.

V. Reports of Special Committees, Projects, and Forays covered above.

- 1. Mycoflora Committee (Urchek)**
- 2. Culinary Committee**
- 3. Hospitality Committee (Karpas)**

VI. Adjourn 9:27

1. Board Meeting in January TBD. William- We can decide a tentative date now. Our first meeting will be Tuesday Feb. 4th so we should have the next board meeting Thursday January 16th.