

MEETING MINUTES

**Virginia Writers Club, Inc.
Board of Governors Meeting
February 6, 2016 – Charlottesville, Virginia**

Attendees: Betsy Ashton (Valley), Maggie Duncan (Blue Ridge/SWAG), Linda Layne (Richmond/Blue Ridge), Chuck Lumpkin (Valley), Kimba Dalferes (Valley), Dick Raymond (Valley), Linda Ensign (Northern Virginia), June Forte (Write by the Rails), Fred Fanning (Riverside), and Leslie Truex (Blue Ridge).

1. Betsy Ashton called the meeting to order at 10:35 AM.
2. Leslie Truex introduced herself to the group. She is a member of the Blue Ridge chapter.
3. The agenda was reviewed. June Forte asked that an update of the recent poetry event be added. Chuck Lumpkin made a motion to accept the agenda, as modified. Linda Layne seconded the motion. All were in favor and motion was approved.
4. Betsy Ashton noted that no correspondence had been received. Therefore, no discussion of correspondence was held.
5. Maggie Duncan announced that she will transcribe the notes from the September Board of Governors meeting and provide to Fred Fanning for approval at the May meeting of the Board of Governors.
6. Linda Layne provided treasurer's report. She spoke about the 2015 summary. She noted that some of the 2015 activity are included in the 2016 financial report. She also indicated that a deficit was recorded and she spoke to the deficit specifically caused by the annual meeting. She noted that we needed to look for things to cut from the event to balance the budget. Linda Layne spoke about the increased cost of postage for that event. Maggie Duncan talked about the growth in the cost of food for the event. Maggie Duncan explained that the facility offered lower-cost meals but VWC had chosen a better meal. A short discussion was held by the attendees at the annual meeting and its history. The discussion focused on downsizing the annual meeting and possibly moving it to the Edna location. It was also noted that we needed to better use the newsletter to notify people of the annual meeting rather than additional mailings. It was also noted that by selecting a lower cost lunch menu could reduce the cost. It was believed that leaving the speaker fee as is would provide good quality speakers. Betsy Ashton went around the table and asked for any additional points for this discussion. June Forte recommended that we do a retreat to discuss the annual meeting at length. Linda (Layne) stated that she is also handling the finances of the Valley and Blue Ridge Chapters. Betsy Ashton expressed concern about upcoming IRS changes that will necessitate all chapter finances to be handled by the central 501(3) (c) organization. Linda Ensign will

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discuss this with the Northern Virginia Chapter treasurer to ensure the NovaWC chapter is in compliance with upcoming IRS requirements.

7. The group discussion returns to the financial discussion. Linda Layne explained tables for the Festival of the Book for Blue Ridge and Valley Writers. Maggie Duncan asked whether the VWC should allow separate tables for the Festival of the Book. A discussion ensued about chapters having the right to have separate tables at the Festival of the Book. It was determined that as long as the chapters paid for their own tables that it would be acceptable for chapters and the club to both be represented at the Festival of the Book. Kimba Dalferes asked about the line item amount for new members in February. Linda Layne explained the spreadsheet was correct. Betsy Ashton asked about Write by the Rails experiment that took money from new chapter members being accepted for the fee for joining the VWC. A discussion determined that the increase in membership was due to the experiment.
8. Betsy Ashton raised the issue that the IRS regulations for non-profits require chapters to send all the money to the parent organization with the 501(c) (3) status. If this isn't done, the chapter will have to get their own 501(c) (3) status. Chapters cannot use the VWC tax number for chapter checking accounts.
9. The discussion for the 2016 budget was tabled until after the symposium discussion. Chuck Lumpkin moved to accept the financial report as modified. Dick Raymond seconded. The vote was taken and the motion passed.
10. The newsletter was discussed next. The question is “Do members see value in the newsletter?” It was noted that there was a lack of input from the chapters. There was a question about whether we could determine how many people were actually opening the newsletter. It was explained that we do have a mechanism in the website that allows us to count the number of people who actually open the e-mail with the newsletter in it. Betsy Ashton will get the information to attendees. June Forte noted that the VWC website should be the place to go for all of our members. Linda Ensign said that it would be helpful to have a newsletter point of contact from each chapter to give her information about chapter activities and member successes before the publication of the newsletter. Those in attendance determined that this was a good idea and one that we should implement. Betsy will provide Linda Ensign (using the newsletter@virginiawritersclub.org USERID) access to the membership list so that ticklers can be sent to newsletter correspondents/chapter presidents about Newsletter deadlines.

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11. The next topic of discussion was the scholarship Fred Fanning provide the packet of info of guidance for the scholarship for 2016. The package was discussed and the idea of adding a provision that the check would be paid to the University rather than the student or scholarship recipient was recommended. Fred Fanning then noted that he needs three volunteers to judge the scholarship applicants. Maggie Duncan volunteered to be a judge. June Forte asked if anything had been put in the newsletter about 2015 Scholarship Recipient Fred Fanning answered that there had not been. The group discussion noted that we should include an update or identify the 2015 recipient when the 2016 announcement is sent. This would include a picture of the 2015 winner. June Forte volunteered to get a picture of the 2015 winner for the newsletter. Fred Fanning volunteered to get the newsletter information to Linda Ensign Publishing. Kimba Dalferes made a motion to accept the scholarship guidance as amended by the discussion. Chuck Lumpkin seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved. Chuck Lumpkin then raised the issue of holding a raffle for an IT device like a Kindle or iPad to raise money for the scholarship. The idea was liked by those in attendance and Fred Fanning was tasked to provide a short description of how the raffle might be conducted for this year to gain additional financing for the scholarship.
12. June Forte gave an update on the poetry event held at the Hylton Center for Fine Arts. The event was titled “In the Company of Laureates.” Two hundred people attended the event. June noted that the people that attended were all happy and want more events like this. This event was sponsored by the Write by the Rails chapter and was considered a success.
13. Dick Raymond made a motion to break for lunch. Leslie Truex seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion passed.
14. Betsy Ashton reconvened the Board of Governors meetings at 1:03 PM.
15. The next order of business was the requests for chapter grants. First was the Riverside Writers application for a grant for \$200.00 to pay the speaker fee for the annual chapter poetry in April. Fred Fanning provided a brief explanation of the event and answered questions by those in attendance. It was recommended that the grant is given with two provisos. The first was that the event is advertised as sponsored by a chapter of the VWC. Second was that the event is publicized in the VWC newsletter. June Forte made a motion to accept the grants with the provisions. Dick Raymond seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved. Betsy Ashton provided a brief explanation of the grant request from Hanover Writers Club for a charity event. The same provisions were discussed for this grant as for Riverside Writers. Dick Raymond made a motion to approve the \$100 grant. June Forte seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

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16. The next order of business was for Maggie Duncan to brief on the symposium for this year. She indicated that the symposium is not making money and has not for the last two years. Her recommendation is that we focus on cutting costs associated with the symposium. Kimba Dalferes discussed the cost of the registration specifically noting that more people were taking advantage of the early bird registration fee, which gave us less money. Chuck Lumpkin noted that there were 72 attendees. Of that only 50 people actually paid a fee for the event. The other 22 attendees were speakers and honorary members who don't pay. The question is "Whether we should change the annual symposium to but a biennial event giving us more time to prepare for the event?" Kimba Dalferes noted that if we did that we would need to keep the momentum moving forward in the year that we did not have the symposium so that we didn't lose attendees. Chuck Lumpkin discussed the cost of the handout given to every participant. Maggie Duncan raised the issue that the handout and facility usage were the primary costs for the symposium. Maggie Duncan noted that the handout was one of the things that each attendee liked. Linda Layne indicated her support in providing additional work and effort to reduce the cost of the handout as well. It was also discussed giving a flash drive with the handout instead of a physical handout. It was determined that this was not acceptable. Chuck Lumpkin identified the fact that we can actually publish this handout on CreateSpace as a book for less cost. Maggie Duncan spoke about the key positions that need to be filled for the 2016 symposium. She referred to the handout she provided to all attendees. Betsy Ashton asked that chapter presidents ask their membership if anyone that wished to help to please contact Maggie. Linda Ensign volunteered to fill the PR/Media position on the 2016 Symposium. Kimba will forward information from previous Symposiums to Linda Ensigns.
17. Kimba Dalferes briefed the attendees on the results of the 2015 brainstorming session. She noted that two items were completed. A mission/description of the VWC symposium was completed. An events calendar was also developed. Furthermore, the newsletter is now working even though it is not getting much input from the chapters. The group discussed ways that the VWC could get chapters to provide information. Fred Fanning volunteered to provide information to the group on an example chapter recognition program. Fred Fanning recommended a program to recognize chapters that do what the VWC recommends they do. Kimba Dalferes then led a discussion that determined that the following items being important:
- a. Conduct a survey of the technical needs at the chapter level is a 2016 priority
 - b. Developing and conducting VWC Roadshow at each chapter is another 2016 priority
 - c. Obtain a newsletter contact from each chapter.

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- d. Identifying expectations of the VWC.
- e. Develop an explanation of how members can use the VWC website
- f. Obtain the voice of the chapter from each chapter.
- g. Obtain members successes from each chapter and highlighting them on the website and in the newsletter.
- h. Determine what responsibilities the chapters have for the symposium.
- i. Identify the overall structure of the VWC. Then determine if changes need to be made to that structure.
- j. Hold a separate meeting with chapter presidents to encourage them to get more involved.
- k. Develop an updated member benefits statement. Fred Fanning volunteered to work on this issue.
- l. Chapters develop their history and coordinate that history with local historical associations as well as county historical societies.

From the list that Kimba Dalferes provided items 1 (Benefits), 3 (Survey), and 7 (Roadshow) were identified as the next tasks to do, as well as training for chapter representatives and improving two-way communication. Fred Fanning will send the Benefits documents to Linda Ensign for review.

18. Betsy Ashton raised the concern that help is needed to staff the VWC table at the Festival of the Book. The people staffing the table would speak to festival attendees about the VWC and recruit new members. Anyone volunteering can sell their books while at the table. The table needs two people there from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The Festival of the Book is held in Charlottesville, Virginia at the Omni downtown. The date is March 19, 2016. Parking is free but you'll need extra time to get through the city to the Omni because the city will be very crowded that day.
19. Next topic of discussion was the need for a statewide coordinator for Gold Nib, Summer Shorts, and Teen writing contests. June Forte volunteered to be the Golden Nib coordinator. Linda Layne volunteered to be the Teen and Summer Shorts coordinator. The contest announcements will be reviewed and updated by (??), and will be advertised on the website by (??)
20. The next topic for discussion was a book for the VWC 100th anniversary. Maggie Duncan made a motion that the VWC develop a book made of member articles composing an anthology. Chuck Lumpkin seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion was approved. Theme for anthology will be Virginia, title TBD. Will be in the form of an anthology and include poetry, essays, short stories, and flash fiction.

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21. Betsy Ashton noted that we had completed the agenda and asked for a motion to adjourn. Dick Raymond made a motion to adjourn. Kimba Dalferes seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the motion was carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM