

09/15/2007

Florida Outdoor Writers Association, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
Homosassa, FL

The meeting was called to order at 2 PM by Chairman Tommy Thompson who then requested Roll Call.

Attending...

Tommy Thompson, Chair
John Kumiski, President
Doug Kelly, Executive Director
Kelly Braden, 1st VP
Loretta Lynn, 2nd VP
Frank Morello, Treasurer
Ed Arrington, Secretary

New board members: Tom Van Horn, Ray Markham, Jill Borski

Existing board members: Dave Burkhardt, Eric Johnson, Ron Presley
Corporate Director: Paul Michele (from FL Fishing Weekly)
Corporate CVB/Tourism Director: Rebecca Allen

Attending later; Dave Burkhardt

Executive Director Doug Kelly read minutes from the previous Board meeting, the last meeting of the 2006-07 class

Rebecca Allen asked for clarifications regarding minutes on 2008 FOWA conference. The minutes were then clarified, and the meeting continued with Jill Borski motioning to accept the minutes and Rebecca Allen seconded. Frank Morello expounded on Minute clarifications, requesting a shorter turnaround to future Board minutes; within 14 days, and posted on the FOWA website by the FOWA Secretary, with a drafted copy to be approved by the board prior to posting. Chairman Tommy Thompson made a recommendation to refine the timeline to 30 days from the date of the BOD meeting; being accepted by the Board.

Sandy Huff queried FOWA's having a savings account of \$82k. Treasurer Frank Morello responded to her query and stated "the threat of lawsuits" was one variable for consideration of such an amount. Board members commented that Frank and Executive Director Doug Kelly should review some type of liability coverage that would cover the concerns, but no specifics were discussed.

Board approved \$271.70 to Executive Director Doug Kelly for new corporate memberships.

New business: Doug Kelly presented his concerns regarding the 2008 Charlotte Harbor conference, with Rebecca Allen chiming in and updating the board on the situation and her efforts regarding the matter; seeking full support from the Board thinking there might be some dissent. Chairman Thompson made it clear that he was in support of Miss Allen's efforts. Kelly Braden continued the conversation and addressed her concerns and expectations of the Charlotte Co. event. Dale Sanders then contributed to the discussion, reporting on his experience regarding the costs of the facilities in and around the Charlotte County location discussed. T.J. Stallings requested that a motion to accept Charlotte County as the official location for the FOWA conference in 2008 was introduced. Doug Kelly suggested leaving open some options as to the specific location, while still committing to Charlotte County, due to the higher costs involved. A heated conversation then ensued as to "some" board members who it was thought might be vying for another location outside of Charlotte Co. This opinion was refuted by Karen Braden, Doug Kelly, and Chairman Thompson. The main concern of the Executive Director and the Board were that any and all costs that might be incurred by FOWA and its members be completely disclosed so as to avoid any misunderstandings before signing any contracts.

A motion to table the discussion on costs was initiated by Board member Jill Borski, with Secretary Ed Arrington seconding, but not before Chairman Tommy Thompson called for the officers and board to support Charlotte County and Rebecca Allen, with an additionally roll call vote; all where "yeas", with Dave Burkhart absent from the vote.

Chairman Thompson discussed committees that would help steer the Charlotte County conference. Additionally, the 2009 conference was brought up, and suggestions to its content were made. Additionally, Executive Director Doug Kelly reported that he had researched several locations, and would report to the BOD at a future assembly.

Dave Burkhart made a welcomed arrival, and reported in to the Board meeting.

Chairman Thompson went over the applications that had been received for the current year's FOWA scholarship award. Only one applicant, Mike Matthews, was considered to meet FOWA requirements and Chairman Thompson requested that a check and "photo-op" be scheduled to make the presentation.

Past Presidents Council- (Dale Sanders, reader of report) FOWA's public image was to be surveyed. FOWA Craft, articles, and education of membership was expounded upon from the report.

Kelly Braden's work on the FOWA email communication was discussed and her work recognized and greatly appreciated by all present, with newly seated FOWA President John A. Kumiski chiming in with additionally remarks of appreciation to Ms. Braden's fine work. Executive Director Doug Kelly who had worked with Kelly made similar kind remarks. Finally; Sandy Huff graciously volunteered to put together a press release on the new scholarship recipient.

Ben Dyall's contributions to the scholarship program were also noted.

Chairman Thompson asked for additional New Business: Sandy Huff made recommendations that FOWA include paying for membership in FOWA for new scholarship winners. Frank Morello chimed in with approval, but voiced concerns on how to deal with FOWA's requirements to meet IRS 501 C (3) concerning the same.

Chairman Thompson discussed FOWA's spring event at UF's College of Journalism from early 2007, and how FOWA might consider the continuation of such a program.

President Kumiski discussed how beneficial it would be to involve community leaders into future FOWA conferences. And additional Journalism efforts of FOWA were discussed and encouraged in local colleges across the state.

Sandy Huff brought up the efforts to support the organization called PEN women. Frank Morello contributed to the discussion by outlining FOWA's requirements to meet its non-profit status, requests for paid speakers, and Extension programs. Guest and President of the Texas Outdoor Writers Association, Mr. Ralph Winingham, chimed in with the idea of holding a "book signing" to introduce outdoor writers, photographers and speakers to the public, and to display the outdoor writer's art and trade.

On another point of interest, Jim Wilson shared with the Board the needs of The Larry Hatchet Fishing Foundation, and thought was given on how FOWA could contribute. Additionally, Jim asked the Board to consider some tribute to Tim Tucker through an event or program. FOWA had contributed \$2000 to a past event prior to the Larry Hatchet Fishing Foundation; with which Jim pointed out, has become a multi-state effort. Frank Morello piggy backed the conversation noting that FOWA would NOT be able to meet its obligations under Federal law through such endeavors. This brought up the issue of the FOWA scholarship/ event chairman requirements. Chairman Tommy Thompson contributed to the discussion by outlining the steps needed to implement any donations, and reports needed for review of any such proposed foundations, making it clear that FOWA is not able to contribute to organizations that do not specifically promote the foundational requirements of FOWA, and the IRS' requirements.

Ray Markham revisited an earlier issue regarding event and general liability insurance coverage for FOWA. Jill Borski made a motion that an individual(s) be appointed to research issue; but was referred to the Treasurer and Executive Director. Ralph from TOWA chimed in to reveal what their organization had done to address this important issue, and of their purchase of coverage.

Eric Johnson from the Florida Wildlife Commission discussed the afternoon's SKISH contest and its results.

President Kumiski discussed registration problems at this year's conference at Homosassa, and the disruptions by "outsiders", with Doug Kelly expounding on this problem. Price penalties were entertained for those FOWA members who declined to pre-register for future FOWA conferences, checking in on the day of the conference. Many members contributed to this discussion with various points of view including, ticket distribution, wrist bands, and ID's to keep up with who is to be where, and when.

All New business was then adjourned, and a call to end the Board's meeting by Chairman Tommy Thompson was introduced, and seconded by the membership, ending the meeting at 3:15 PM.