

Minutes of the Northern Virginia Bead Society Special [Zoom] Meeting – August 18, 2021

The general meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm by president Sherry Ellis.

Approximately 25 members participated.

Business Meeting

Tonight's board meeting was open to all members to discuss the viability of NVBS in both the short term and the long term. Thanks were given to those who came as it indicates that there is interest in NVBS continuity. We will need to decide what is most important to us both as a society and as members. What do we want for the society; what do we hope to accomplish? The current board is willing to continue what we've been doing, but new volunteers will need to figure out what is desired and how things will happen in the future.

Sherry's term as President ends in December. It took her a year to understand how the organization works. She is willing to stay on for another term but also let members know that if anyone else wants to step up into the position, she is willing to step down. It was mentioned that there is no manual for the duties and responsibilities for President, and quite possibly not for the other Board positions as well.

The Secretary's term also ends in December. Alison is willing to stay on for another term, despite the fact that she has been in the position for a number of terms, in violation of the current bylaws. She is also willing to step down if someone else is interested in running for the position.

Nominations for President and Secretary will be made in October, and the election will be in November.

Speaking of the bylaws, they are woefully out of date and do not reflect how we currently operate. Examples include the defunct Bead Show and Standing Committees, neither of which are relevant. The current bylaws are ignored on a regular basis and need to be redone to reflect current operations. While there are no specific requirements as to what should be included in the bylaws, they are needed in order to have protection from claims of malfeasance. The bylaws, in their present form, need to be discarded and recreated from scratch. The current Board will help in terms of explaining how things currently work, how those methods came about, and will offer suggestions of any desired improvements. Andrea W has experience with bylaws and may be able to provide guidance. NVBS operates on a "get it done" basis, rather than on what's needed. We can continue to punt but that is not an ideal solution or situation. When the bylaws are rewritten, approval will have to come from the entire membership.

NVBS currently holds meetings and classes in a virtual format. That is expected to continue at present and at least for the very near future. The attending members were asked if they wanted to continue in a virtual format or go to a hybrid format with meetings held both in person and virtually. The overwhelming preference is for virtual only.

One of the items discussed was Melissa Shippee's Suspension class. We have two sessions of this scheduled – the first one is February 20, 2022, and a second one has been scheduled for February 21, 2022. The first class sold out very quickly, Melissa was asked if she could do it a second time. The registration link was made available to current members.

Given the pandemic and resulting virtual format, there was discussion about the need to speed up the process of choosing and arranging for classes. Prior to the now-ubiquitous Zooming, the process needs to be much quicker and much more decisive, especially since many teachers are managing their own teaching schedules and offerings without needing to go through a third party, such as a store or bead society.

The website was another topic of discussion. Ours used to be hosted by Yahoo Small Business for the previous ten years, but we want to move it to a different host. We recently began using Wordpress but Yahoo is only giving limited support and has offered the wrong advice. Regarding a new host – there has been some site revision, which may result in the site being down for several days. We need a second Webmaster for better coverage and support for our current Webmaster, Cheryl.

Upcoming Events

September, October and November general meetings have been scheduled for the Vienna Community Center. We cannot book for December until some time in mid- to late- October. We have renewed membership with the Vienna Arts Center and have access there. Depending on the size of the classes and members' desires for in-person and/or virtual classes, it has yet to be determined if there will be in-person classes, and if social distancing can be accommodated. Part of this discussion included Sherry Serafini's projected December event. Sherry will be contacted to find out her preferences. As we have a number of non-local members, it is highly unlikely that we will go to completely in-person classes. The expectation at present is to have either completely virtual events or hybrid events with both an in-person and virtual format. Several non-local members expressed appreciation for being able to join us virtually.

There was also discussion of venue for both meetings and classes. Kathy C. stated correctly that we don't know what the future holds, and won't for some time. She suggested keeping everything virtual for the present, and not paying rental fees. Diane D. replied that if we decide not to use the VCC, we wouldn't get any refunds, only credit toward future rentals, and by declining these rentals may result in our not being able to get any future rentals. The possibility of teaching in someone's home was also mentioned. As far as booking rooms at VCC and/or VAS, it all needs to be done in advance. Although the September meeting will be virtual, the rental fee to VCC is part of the cost of doing business. At some point, NVBS needs a "facility coordinator" to arrange for bookings.

Regarding virtual meetings, we will have to see what kind of equipment the Vienna Community Center can provide. Doris suggested we invest in high quality Zoom equipment, as well as a data plan. That will have to be on hold until we know what VCC Internet capability is before we make any such investment. We also want to make sure we can help the teachers who may or may not have adequate equipment to teach virtually for us.

Also to be decided is the number of meetings desired – virtual 3 to 4 times per year, in person twice a year, or other options.

Another topic is whether or not we want to have a directory, and if so, how should it be handled, especially if a member declines to be included. The closest thing we have to a directory is the Excel spreadsheet used for membership. Sherry will plan to send out requests regarding a directory; whether it will be complete or partial we depend on the members' desires to be included or opt out. A Listserv could be another possibility. Although the directory is only for members, in the past, there were some who abused it.

We will also need a Facebook monitor, as Elaine C will be leaving the area. It would be possible for her to continue doing it remotely, but again, that may not be ideal. Also needed is someone who can run meetings in the event that the President is not available.

Upcoming classes are Cliff Swain-Solomon in September and Miriam Shimon in October. Once we see how those meetings go, especially September, we can revisit many of these issues for future events. Cliff will have a presentation at the September meeting; we do not have a program for the October meeting.

Financials

The 2020 year-end balance was \$56482.42. As of Today, August 18, our current balance is \$62,841.01. That figure represents the fact that we have collected registration fees for upcoming classes but we have not yet paid our teachers for the classes or the speaking fees for their presentation(s). As we are holding virtual classes, we do not have any additional costs that we've had in the past, such as transportation, accommodations, meals, etc. If we go to in-person events, our costs will rise considerably. Also mentioned was the fact that we still have no source of income other than membership fees. The money we collect for workshops does not cover the full cost of workshops. As a non-profit organization, we subsidize the guest artist costs for our members. We need to find another income source or perhaps begin to spend down our resources. Doris C made a request to see budgets and accounting records for before Covid and the current situation for comparison.

Selling things on Etsy was discussed, but Diane D says this has been attempted in the past and has not been successful. If we were to go that route, we would need a dedicated crew to work Etsy.

Susan B offered thanks for including members in tonight's open Board meeting and for making it possible and appreciation for what the current Board is doing.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38.