

**LAKE CHAPALA SOCIETY
BOARD MEETING
MAY 13, 2009**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Creevan; Karen Schirack, Mary Alice Sargent, Mary Ann Waite, Kenneth Caldwell

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Rick Feldmann; Richard Bailey

OTHERS PRESENT: Terry Vidal, LCS Office Administrator; Roger Borg, Treasurer; Lynn Bishop, Recording Secretary; Mark Niederman, LCS Audit Committee

GUESTS: Robert & Bonnie Kleffel

The meeting was called to order at 11:35 am by President, Nancy Creevan.

Minutes of April 8, 2009 Meeting

Moved by Mary Ann Waite; seconded by Mary Alice Sargent that the April 8, 2009 minutes be approved as distributed. Motion Approved

Treasurer's Report: Roger Borg (Copies of the full Financial Report Attached)

Copies of the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual for the entire budget were distributed and each Board member received a Profit & Loss report for their areas.

Action: Board members to make copies of the Profit & Loss report for each department in their area and distribute them to the appropriate department heads for review.

Roger indicated that his overall impression of the current financial status is that it is okay as long as everyone sticks to the budget.

Moved by Mary Alice Sargent; seconded by Mary Ann Waite that the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented. Motion Approved

Office Administrator's Report: Terry Vidal

1. After some refurbishing one computer has been installed in the Reading Room for the members use. A Linux operating system with open office productivity software is being tested on this.
2. A lot of progress has been made on the remodel of the website and they are trying to have it ready for July 1. However, he now needs updated information for each area.

Action: Terry will print out the current website information for each Board member's area and put it in their box for review.

Action: Board members will provide Department Heads with copies of the current information in order to have it updated.

3. A staff meeting was held with Ken Caldwell and Mary Alice Sargent in attendance and with Syvina as a guest. Wages were discussed and Syvina provided information for questions regarding benefits, vacation pay etc. Terry provided copies of a wage
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analysis for all staff. Based on the review he recommended wage increases for three (3) staff members.

Action: Nancy requested further recommendations from Terry, Karen and Mary Anne regarding these employees and these to the next meeting.

Mary Alice Sargent asked that a be decision made today on one staff member and requested that this matter be dealt with in Closed Session at the end of the meeting. This was agreed to.

5. A lot of progress has been made on reconciling the directory ad sales. Terry hopes to have a document ready that everyone can agree on by the time Rick returns. Nancy expressed concern regarding whether there will be a workable system in place for the directory ad sales in the future. In response Terry stated that there will be a system in place.
6. Terry distributed copies of information previously requested by the Board which indicates the extra hours that he has worked in the last month. Nancy pointed out that this information had been requested this information in order to see if Terry's hours need to be revised upwards in the future or if someone is needed to take over some of the work. Karen pointed out that if the Board goes ahead with Conrad's strategic planning this could have an impact on the workload.

Audit Committee Report: Mark Niederman

Mark Niederman reported that the Audit Committee had received an e-mail regarding the governing documents. This issue is a problem of perception not with reality, and it was agreed that the existing document and all attachments should be put on the website and attached to the minutes.

Action: Rick Feldmann be contacted and asked to provide a copy of the Governing Document so they can be put on the website and also provide a copy to the Recording Secretary for the minutes.

New Video Director

Nancy Creevan introduced Tom Keane. Tom reported that when ordering new videos the Video Library been using a system that gives the ten (10) most popular movies but noted that he is not sure this is the best system for the LCS clientele. He felt that a Suggestion Box outside the Video Library so members could put their requests in it might be helpful. It was pointed out that here is already a Suggestion Box by the main office but members may not think to put video requests in there. Terry suggested providing forms outside the Video Library on which members can request titles of movies. These could be given to the volunteer who in turn would put them in the Department Head's box.

The new website will have an area where members can suggest new titles and Mary Ann stated that it is hoped in phase 2 of updating the website the entire video and book libraries will be on the website. There will be limited capabilities but members should be able to search by title to see if the movie they want is in the library.

Nancy thanked Tom for taking on this responsibility and he retired from the meeting.

Wilkes Education Centre Recognition Day: Mary Alice Sargent

Mary Alice reported that the decision was made on Monday to completely cancel the WEC Recognition Day. Some of the teachers may do a smaller function with their own students. The \$5000 pesos allocated for the Recognition Day cannot be carried forward to the next year but Mary Alice indicated that possibly some of it might be used for something in the Fall.

Mary Alice also reported that there is a possibility that there will be no summer vacations for the Mexican students this year because of the current closures due to the Swine Flu. This would have a impact on the Wilkes Center. Robert Kleffel provided Mary Alice with the name of a person to contact for more information regarding this.

Gillespie Gift – Committee Recommendation: Robert Kleffel

Robert Kleffel, head of the Gillespie Gift Committee presented recommendations from the committee regarding the use of this donation. The committee had three purposes :

- 1) to make suggestions as to what the Gillespie funds could and couldn't be used for. The Committee used the wording of the New York Insurance Policy "The Lake Chapala Society A.C. , English Language Library, Book and Equipment Purchase Funds: and conversations with Jane Gillespie's brother, Hugh Fullerton, and an e-mail from Hugh Fullerton, to determine what the funds from the donation could be used for. The e-mail from Hugh Fullerton regarding this point read:

"The Lake Chapala Society A.C. English Language Library, Book and Equipment Purchase Funds". That seems pretty specific, but I would think it would not be remiss to interpret that broadly enough to include library renovation, if that's what the society thinks is needed.

I presume Jane and Norm consulted someone connected with the society when they wrote that beneficiary designation in 2002. I'm not going to second-guess the society on how the money is used, but I would appreciate being kept informed..... (Copy of e-mail attached.

The Committee then made recommendations that they, and Hugh Fullerton, could be comfortable with. (Report Attached)

- A. Primary purpose: Reading material including books, magazines and newspapers
- B. Furniture and equipment: computer equipment for library use, tables and chairs, electronic reading devices such as E Readers, shelving
- C. Modifications to facilities which could include remodeling of library and expansion of space.

Gillespie funds were not to be used for:

- D. Operating expenses such as salaries, office and book supplies, utilities, facilities maintenance and repair, cleaning
- E. After the initial use of funds for items A, B and C above, the remaining funds should be placed in a low risk interest bearing account where interest would be used for the primary purpose A above.

The committee felt that they would not use all the \$60,000 immediately and after they have made some initial purchases of books and equipment some of the money would be put in an interest bearing account and that money would be used for buying books in perpetuity.

- 2) The committee's second purpose was to look at future plans for the LCS Library. There was consensus that we should begin to experiment with new technologies for the benefit of our members.

Recommendations made by the committee:

A. Member's Reading Room/Mexico Book Collection: Create a reading room that combines an information and magazine center. This has been talked about for a long time and has the support of many people in the community. The committee would like to see a first class collection of books and magazines on Mexico including architecture history, travel, senior health, local gardening, Mexican food, home and interior design materials for this area. These would all be put in a Reading Room with comfortable seating for perhaps ten (10) people.

B. Modernize with Technology

The book industry is dying quickly and many large newspapers are now going to publishing only on the net. The use of E Readers, such as Kindle, is becoming the usual way to read everything. The committee envisions the LCS having equipment such as this and would like to start testing and evaluating the use of E Readers and computers for LCS members. These types of things will make the library more attractive to current and prospective members.

3. Facilities Planning. The need for more space was discussed. If a reading room is going to be created, and if more computers are going to be used, more space needs to be devoted to seating. There is also a need for more space for fiction books. More copies of the most popular books should be available and the library must systematically make sure that there are copies of all books in a series available. Books also need to be replaced regularly so they look "fresh". Some space will be freed up by culling old books but most of that space will be needed for adding to the fiction books.

Robert noted that the committee recommends that the Board determine how they can get as much space as possible and the committee would then be pleased to provide a budget and a plan as to how the funds could be used.

In response to questions raised by Board members Robert indicated that a new reading room would require about double the space it has now, but this would depend on placement of windows and doors. He also indicated that the library could be housed in a separate building if necessary or it could be incorporated into existing space but suggested that the Board and the committee meet to discuss preferences. In response to the question of how much of the donation funds the committee feels would be used now and approximately how much would go into the endowment fund for ongoing book purchases, Robert indicated that this would depend on whether an existing space is being reconfigured and expanded or whether a new space is being built. Ken Caldwell noted that he is uncomfortable using any figures at this time.

Discussion followed regarding the current book purchasing budget and the fact that it is under spent at this time. Robert responded that there is currently an ongoing issue with how to get books here without paying a large amount of money. This issue is being worked on now.

Nancy Creevan thanked Robert and the Library Committee for all their hard work.

Ken Caldwell then asked to address the Board. He pointed out that there is nothing that says that when a person dies and leaves money to the LCS that they have to take it and he felt that a vote should be held as to whether to accept the donation or not.

Moved by Ken Caldwell; seconded by Karen Schirack that the LCS accept the Gillespie funds in accordance with the terms of the New York Insurance Policy "The Lake Chapala Society A.C., English Language Library, Book and Equipment Purchase Funds" and the e-mail from Jane Gillespie's brother, Hugh Fullerton in which he states "*but I would think it would not be remiss to interpret that broadly enough to include library renovation, if that's what the society thinks is needed*", and that the LCS Board vow to be good stewards of the money for the good of the membership and that it be used as per the recommendations of the Library Committee with the exception of article E which should be changed to read "After the initial use of funds for items A, B and C above, the remaining funds should be placed in a low risk interest bearing account where interest should be used for the purposes set forth in A and B of the recommendations. Motion Approved

Ballots from December Recall Meeting

Moved by Ken Caldwell; seconded by Mary Alice Sargent that the ballots and material used be destroyed. Motion Approved

The meeting recessed from 1:10pm to 1:20pm

Gift to LCS

Nancy Creevan reported that there is a document on file for a Post Life Gift from Marguerite Marxsen that stipulates that 40% of whatever there is in her estate be donated to the LCS.

Moved by Mary Alice Sargent; seconded by Mary Ann Waite that Marguerite Marxsen be made a Lifetime Member of the LCS. Motion Approved

Banking Update: Mary Alice Sargent

Mary Alice has deposited the Gillespie check in the Lloyds account and Terry has a break down as to what is donation money and what are other funds in the account.

Another issue is to get some people on the Bancomer account. Mary Alice reviewed the ongoing problems with trying to accomplish this. A letter was finally sent to Bancomer stating that if this issue was not resolved in a timely manner the LCS would be pull their money out.

The last communication from them was that they thought there would be a definitive answer by Monday. No answer has yet been received but it is hoped the attorney will soon report that the LCS request to add Nancy and Rick to the account will be approved.

It has been suggested that additional people be added to the Lloyd's account. These people would need to provide a copy of their passport, FM3 and proof of residence.

Terry suggested that when adding people to the accounts it should be set up so that two signatures out of hopefully four people will be required in order to withdraw money. Mary Alice suggested that Terry be added to both accounts now and following the elections the next Board can add the other people.

Blood Pressure Program Update: Karen Schirack

The volunteers have agreed to using the talking books room to conduct the blood pressure testing and Linda Wright and Annette Reppen have agreed to coordinate the blood pressure program. They are currently recruiting more volunteers. They have asked for a second table to use when there are two volunteers taking blood pressure. Terry suggested that an insulating device such as some type of pillow should solve the vibration problem they are having.

Action: Karen to find out if the volunteers for the blood pressure program need anything else in order to do their jobs.

Grounds and Gardens Plans and Vision: Ken Caldwell

Ken reported that during the spring shut down they focused on moving offices and let slide what work would have been done in the gardens except for some work in the front. He noted that the idea of moving the offices had been presented in the past with a proposed budget of \$58,000 pesos. This move was done for \$10,000 pesos and the help of a lot of volunteers. An additional \$5000 pesos was drawn in order to purchase plants and a shredder/chipper. More research is required before purchasing a shredder but plants were purchased and \$3,000 pesos is being used on the walkway being built between the smoking area and the ticket booth area. Ken recently met a professional landscaper who has agreed to evaluate the composting and mulching needs of the LCS.

Ken reported that the smoking area will have to be moved a short distance in order for the walkway to be completed. This should not take too long. Discussion followed regarding the problems that can arise when moving the smoking area.

Work needs to be done on the roof over the admin building and some work also needs to be done on the septic system. As the volunteers in the garden have found there are very little specimen/unusual plants and even the good plants are not blooming properly. The overall plan is to clean out the junk stuff while working with knowledgeable people to put together some visually interesting, affordable and easy to maintain ground cover, and also to add some color to the gardens. This can be introduced by putting in pots that can be moved. In the meantime, they are continuing to clean up so they can see what is needed. Ken showed Board members the plans for the front gardens and noted that they will be documenting what is found in each

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bed as they get to them and will do a plan for each area. These will be digitized and a schedule for trimming/dividing/fertilizing etc. will be done. This will be shared with the Mexican gardeners.

Ken noted that he wants there to be clear direction to the volunteers and paid staff as to who is doing what, and why they are doing it. He wants to ensure that the volunteers and paid staff understand that the staff answers to the Director not to the volunteers. He does not want the volunteers asking the gardeners to do things.

Karen asked how this will affect setting up things such as tables, chairs etc. It was noted that ideally each group using the facility should provide their own people for set up. However, it was pointed out that volunteers are likely to object to doing manual labor and also some events require speakers and microphones and there should be someone with some technical knowledge available to do the set up.

Discussion followed regarding the future plans for the buildings and grounds. It was suggested that more research be done about the possibility of moving up instead of consuming more green space. It is important not to spring major changes on the members. We must be proactive in advising membership of possible changes. It was suggested that changes should wait until the Strategic Planning process is completed. However, it was also noted that it is necessary to find more room for the library and the Board must look at other possibilities and will have to, at some point, make decisions about what to do. Ken pointed out that the Strategic Plan will be for long term. Changes need to be made now and money spent now will not be wasted if it provides better space in the short term.

Action: Ken will work with Karen to look into changes required for the Library.

Spanish Program Tuition/instructor Compensation: Mary Alice Sargent

No conclusions have been reached on this.

Credentials of Volunteers/Service Providers at LCS: Ken Caldwell

Nancy Creevan read an e-mail from Rick Feldmann regarding Ken's proposal for requesting proof of credentials from volunteers and service providers at the LCS. Ken explained that this has been an issue for some time. People use services provided at the LCS and think that the LCS is giving their approval for these providers. This is not the case, but since it is difficult to change people's perceptions it is important that the Board ensure that people have the appropriate credentials for what they are doing. Discussion followed regarding whether it is necessary to have proof of credentials from all service providers and volunteers. It was agreed that at the least people providing medical services should have proof of credentials. Terry suggested that a list of all positions could be reviewed to define positions where credentials should be required. Nancy suggested that at this point this requirement should be limited to medical related activities with the possibility of it being expanded to cover other areas in the future.

Action: Ken Caldwell to rewrite the proposal so it covers medical personnel and volunteers and will present it to the Board at the next meeting.

Security at LCS: Ken Caldwell

This is an open action item although Ken reported that he does have someone who is willing to lend a closed circuit TV system to the LCS to see if it would cover our needs.

Discounts and Promotions for Members: Mary Ann Waite and Terry Vidal

After some talk about outdated promotions for the LCS Mary Ann Waite reported that she has been approached by someone who is willing to be the LCS representative to go out to the community and solicit discounts for LCS members. She would require a contract written by LCS. It is hoped that eventually there would be an LCS sticker that businesses giving a discount to put in their window. Another suggestion made was to work with Real Estate agents. The idea would be to sell them a membership package at a discount and they would then give them free to long term renters and new buyers. Nancy agreed that more promotion of the LCS is required and suggested having an LCS Board member be on the agenda at various group's meetings to discuss the LCS would be helpful. Mark suggested that after the Strategic Planning process would be good times to have representatives speak at various meetings. Terry noted that usually part of the role of the Executive Director is to be the public face of the organization until such time as it becomes necessary to have a Public Relations department.

Action: Terry Vidal to pursue the offer made to the LCS to work on getting LCS member discounts at various businesses.

Staff Salaries: Terry Vidal

This topic was discussed under the Office Admin Report.

Strategic Planning Status:

Action: Nancy will forward information received from Conrad.

LCS Website Update: Mary Ann Waite

Mary Ann has talked to Hugo from Sol y Luna which is a mail forwarding service to see if he would be will to provide a free forwarding address to the LCS in return for a free ad on the website. This would be helpful when purchasing videos and library books. She suggested that the Board consider the possibility of offering free ads on the website for other services the LCS might need. It was agreed that Mary Ann had the authority to set up this agreement, but there must be a contract and she was asked to coordinate it with Julian.

Around the Table

Mary Alice Sargent: Nothing

Karen Shirack: Signage is needed so people can find the Information Desk, etc. Terry suggested putting arrows on the white board until signage is ready. Karen will be interviewing someone for the Medical Director position.

Mary Ann Waite: If there are positions still open in any areas the information should be submitted for the classified section on the website. It was pointed out that the open positions are listed on the white board but this should be cleaned off. In the future if the board is being used for anything people should ensure that it is kept clean and readable.

Ken Caldwell: Feels that this Board is not doing a good enough job of promoting the good things that it is doing. The LCS needs to attract people to come and serve on the Board. He proposed that ways be found of doing more advertising of the good things that are being done. Nancy suggested that one area for advertising this would be the column in the Lake Chapala Review. She also stated that the Public Relations Committee must become much more proactive in this area. As many avenues as possible should be used to get the information out to the community.

Action: Each Board member to begin creating a list of their areas accomplishments. An e-mail should be sent to all committees in their area requesting this information.

Karen suggested using more bullets rather than sentences in order to make easier reading. Ken suggested that an article should be written along the lines of "Why should you consider being a member of the Board? Why should you care?" Terry suggested that every time the Board does something there should be a press release.

Nancy Creevan: A Nominating Committee is required for the AGM in October and Nancy requested that everyone think about potential committee members. They should be somewhat knowledgeable about the LCS and how the Board is structured so they can interview people, and they must be a member of the LCS.

Mary Ann explained that the Nominating Committee is appointed by the President. The Committee presents a slate to the membership. She suggested that if someone is nominated from the floor they should have to come forward and provide the membership with an idea of their qualifications for the position. Concern was expressed that people can be nominated from the floor but it was pointed out that to change that would require a by-law change which would have to be done at a Special Meeting requiring 30 days notice. Board members agreed that the mandate of the Nominating Committee should be to go out and search for candidates for the Board positions.

Mary Alice informed the Board that in the past when there was more than one person running for a position they actually did campaigning, had cocktail parties, did speeches etc.

Action: Board members were asked to provide suggestions for people for the Nominating Committee.

It was reported that the questionnaire developed by Rick Feldmann has been scanned by someone and is being distributed via e-mail with a note that says only "select" people had received the survey. This is not the case. Terry was asked by Rick to initially run 35 copies and make them available to anyone who came into the office and once these were gone Terry made more copies. However, it was pointed out that there was no announcement to members that this would be done and where they could get a copy. It was also noted that the way the survey is set up there can be no statistical data pulled from it, and also there is no timeline on how long the survey will be available.

Following discussion it was agreed that the survey needs to be withdrawn and the membership informed that due to complaints about the quality of the questions and the distribution of the survey the LCS is withdrawing it at this time. The survey will be rewritten and LCS members will be notified in advance of when it will be available. One suggestion made was to have a small item regarding this in Jeannie Chaussee's column.

Action: Terry Vidal drafts the announcement to the membership about the withdrawal of the survey.

Action: Rick's sub-committee will need to meet to redraft the questionnaire and publicity needs to be done in advance of the survey being made available.

Mary Ann reported that she has plans for the newsletter in the future. She would like to have a colored newsletter that is e-mailed to all members. It should have more detailed information in it and the look of the website and newsletter should be coordinated. Terry pointed out that this too might have to wait until after the strategic planning is completed.

The Board went into closed session at 4:10pm and came out of the closed session at 4:25.

Moved by Mary Alice Sargent, seconded by Ken Caldwell that as of June 1 Celia Lopez Marquez be given a pay raise of 10 pesos per hour from 23 pesos to 33 pesos per hour. Motion Approved.

Moved by Mary Alice Sargent that the meeting be adjourned at 4:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynn Bishop
Recording Secretary