

KAWO Executive Committee Minutes

Wednesday, January 18, 2023 – 7:00 PM on Zoom

Present:

Jessie Davis, Pres.

Jason Ballew, VP

Margo Rebar, Treas.

Gail Simmons, Secretary

Ann Fraser (Program Chair)

Mel Luna (Publications Chair, At-large)

Kathy McGoff (Hospitality Chair)

Ilse Gebhard (Monarch Watch)

Noel Ocen (Outreach and Education Chair, At-large)

Paul Olexia (Past President, Community Projects Chair)

Mike Klug (Past President, Wild for Monarchs Chair)

Beth Bradburn (At-large)

Jessica Hagen (At-large)

Absent:

Dave Wendling, Chair of Site Visit Committee

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm. An additional agenda item, concerning updating the Contact List, was added under New Business.
2. Minutes of the December 14, 2022 meeting were approved with one addition – Tom Small was added to the list of members of this year’s Program Committee. Moved by Paul; seconded by Noel.
3. Treasurer’s Report -- The December Year-End report and the January monthly report were both approved. Moved by Kathy; seconded by Paul. Margo related that she will continue past practice of providing quarterly spending reports for each Committee; a final quarterly report will be sent in early October to allow Committee Chairpersons to manage end-of-year spending. Margo clarified in response to Mel’s question that purchases within the allotted budget by a Committee do not need prior EC approval. Special requests to expand the budget may be entertained.

4. Old Business

- a. Advertising KAWO We have calendar items being advertised in two electronic publications -- NowKalamazoo (<https://nowkalamazoo.com/>) and Kalamazoo-Portage Patch (<https://kalamazooportage-mi.patch.com/>). Gail will continue to follow up with these. In addition our events will be advertised on the WMUK calendar; Mel will follow up with this placement. Kathy will send information on how to advertise in some additional free local publications. Jason requested that we include events such as the Plant Sale in upcoming advertising.
- b. Outreach and Education Committee -- The Committee now includes, in addition to Noel, new member Beth Bradburn and Gail Simmons. New EC member Jessica Hagen also volunteered to join the Committee. There are several tabling opportunities upcoming but the Committee has not yet had a meeting.
- c. Follow-up regarding the Zine – Mel will have a proposal for the EC in time for consideration during our February 15 meeting. She is still researching some pricing options.
- d. Kalamazoo Poetry Festival (Noel) Kaitlin Martin, the organizer, has invited KAWO to participate in the 2023 Kalamazoo Poetry Festival on April 14 & 15. The overall theme for the festival is “The Garden”. In preparation for the festival, we had a preliminary meeting on Jan. 3rd. Ilse and Mike joined us. Follow-up meetings will more clearly define our role in the festival. It is likely that other KAWO volunteers will be needed. Updates to follow.
- e. Recommendation from Program Committee to Change venue for In-Person Programs. Following a site visit to the Portage District Library (PDL), the Program Committee recommended the change, from First United Methodist Church to the PDL, in an email to the EC on December 31, 2022. The site offers many benefits, including kitchen facilities and the technology needed to video record and livestream our events. The new venue is also free to KAWO through the sponsorship of former Secretary Quyen Edwards. The motion to approve the change of venue was made by Kathy and seconded by Gail. Ruth Caputo has

reached out to our former venue, First United Methodist Church, to let them know that we will no longer need their facilities.

5. New Business

- a. The 2022 State of the Chapter Report (SOCR) is due January 31st. (Jason) Please see link below (you will most likely need to sign in). As it states: “This year’s SOCR is divided into five sections: Verification of W-9 Submissions, 2022 SOCR, Verification of Chapter Leadership, Verification of Chapter Profile, and Verification of Chapter Events. **Chapter boards must designate one officer/director to verify/enter data and submit responses for each section of the SOCR.**” Margo has already submitted the EOYCFR. Jason has volunteered to submit the other chapter reports, and he will reach out to other EC members as needed for assistance.

2022 SOCR & EOYCFR Timeline:

W-9 submission – open now – due 12/31/22

SOCR chapter events entry & verification – open by 12/5/22 -- due 1/31/23

SOCR chapter leadership roster verification – open by 12/15/22 -- due 1/31/23

SOCR chapter profile verification – open by 12/15/22 -- due 1/31/23

SOCR questions – open by 12/15/22 -- due 1/31/23

EOYCFR – open by 1/1/23 -- due 2/15/23

- b. Bookmarks (Mel) – With the anticipated change of venue for in-person programs we will need to alter the incorrect bookmarks we now have for distribution. It was generally agreed that the cheapest and easiest way to do this is to print stickers with the new venue and affix them over the old information. Ann will see if she has some existing label-making stock that can be used to print the labels. Mike suggests that, if not, the least expensive way to make them may be to order address labels online with the appropriate text. A number of EC members, including Beth, Jessica, Margo, and Kathy, offered to participate in a “sticker party” to put the labels on the bookmarks once we have them available.

- c. Zoom Presentations for January and February – Jessie will give the Chapter Welcome on Zoom at the January 25 presentation while Paul will introduce the speaker; Jason will give the Welcome at the February 22 presentation and Ruth will introduce the speaker. Gail will be Zoom Host for both meetings.
 - d. Updated Contact Sheet for 2023 – We need an updated list of EC members and their contact information, both for our report to National and for our own use. Noel suggested and it was generally agreed that the new list should include Committee members as well as Chairs. Kathy suggested that the names (but not contact information) of this roster will be posted on the KAWO website; Ann will take care of this once the list is finalized. Gail will circulate the current contact list to all EC members and ask them to a) correct any incorrect information and b) provide current information on members of any Committee that they chair. Once each EC member has sent this information back to Gail, she will circulate a draft Contact List for 2023 and finalize it after any final corrections have been made.
6. Committee Reports/Ad Hoc
- a. **Programs** (Ann) We are all set for the first program of the month (Jan 25, featuring ecologist Kim Chapman). The presentation will be online and the Zoom registration link is on the KAWO website. Members of the Program Committee scoped out the Portage District Library as a new venue for KAWO programs moving forward. The space is attractive, large, has kitchen facilities and tabling space and plenty of parking. Based on last month’s enthusiasm from the Executive Committee and program chairs for this move, the Program Committee has updated the website to reflect the new meeting location beginning in March and Quyen has reserved the space for all 2023 meetings. The Program Committee also discussed possibly adding a few field trips to the 2023 schedule, including bus rental for a longer trip. More work on the logistics is needed but we see it as a good community building event. The Program Committee also began discussing suggestions for speakers and events for 2024 using responses

from the member survey Jason sent out last year, ideas carried over from previous years and new ideas put forward by new committee members. We also discussed additional ways to get the word out on programs, including an email reminder to members on the Monday before the Wednesday program, and the need to update the new bookmarks to reflect the change in meeting venue starting in March. The EC discussed ways to “push” a reminder email about upcoming programming out to KAWO members only using Mailchimp. Jason will investigate how to send the reminder emails and Ann will update Jason periodically about upcoming programs that should be part of the reminders. All of our programming information is on the WildOnes National website, so it may be possible to pull it automatically from there.

- b. **Membership** -- Current membership is 195. This is in line with previous trends. Some members have lapsed (i.e., their membership has expired); working with National on a concerted effort for pro-active communication to members, which for the most part is already happening: (multiple) automated emails sent before membership is set to expire, as well as after their membership has expired (if applicable). Jessie was concerned that members who use paper checks, rather than electronic payment, may have a harder time with renewal, since National does not seem to process those transactions quickly. Jason is on a National subcommittee working on membership renewal issues. It was suggested that we might want to do a paper mailing to our entire list to be sure we have current contact information for our members, since there in some cases members may have changed email addresses and may not be receiving email from us.
- c. **Plant Sale** (Jason) -- Plant order has been placed, and our supplier has confirmed they will deliver plants to the PFC the morning of the Sale. Current initiative is identifying sponsorship levels and marketing/advertising opportunities. Please send any sponsor referrals you can think of. Ideally, sponsors should be like-minded organizations and/or individuals. Think BIG! The current sponsorship

levels are \$1,000, \$500, \$250, and \$100. Jason asked for brainstorming about possible sponsors, which generated a lively discussion including: Bell's Brewery (and other businesses that are using Natives in their landscaping); Victorian Bakery (to whom we donated some plants); Religious organizations such as the Quakers; local growers; the Parks and Recreation Department. Margo suggested that we prepare a "thank you" sheet listing sponsors that would be included in the bag or box with each purchase. There was agreement that other non-profit, like-minded organizations, like SWMLC, could also distribute literature at the Sale, but for-profit businesses would not do so, although they may sponsor. Jason will send out email asking for more ideas and will continue the discussion with the Plant Sale Committee.

7. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm. The next meeting: Wednesday, February 15, 2023
– 7 PM on Zoom

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Simmons
KAWO Secretary