

Fair Hill Nature and Environmental Center
Minutes from the Board of Director's Meeting
September 10, 2008

Attendees: Guy Palmeri
Joe Clancy
Jim Sopa
Tina Freudenberger
Chris Haight

- The meeting opened up with Chris providing an update about the En Plein-Air Art show. On September 14, 25-30 local artists will show up at the Nature Center to begin painting scenes around the Nature Center. Holly will provide a brief overview of the Nature Center to the participants. The artist will paint 5 scenes over the course of 12-14 days. The auction will take place in Oxford, PA on Oct 4. The Cecil Whig will cover the opening day of the painting. Artist will be judged and prizes will be awarded. Karen will send out postcards letting people know when the auction will be held. Jim to get with Karen to make up flyers to post throughout Cecil County

- Newsletter will be worked on in the coming week and sent out soon.

- Chris left the meeting at which point the board members in attendance began discussion regarding changes to the structure of the Nature Center. Since Ron will be taking a leave of absence from the board, Jim opened with a discussion of restructuring to accommodate the empty position of President. Discussions regarding interim president led to Tina motioning that Guy is appointed as President and Joe as Vice President. Jim seconded the motion. Since all board members were not in attendance an e-mail to Mario, Dave, and Paul, and Beth was sent to obtain their vote on this motion. All were in favor.

- In addition, to the appointments, a discussion regarding board meetings and how they will be run took place. We would like to begin having regular board meetings where there will be open discussions regarding matters of the school and then sometimes followed by a meeting with just the executive board members. This is an attempt to provide better oversight and accomplish the goals that we all agree are needed. In addition, a discussion regarding Board size, and specific functions was brought up. Jim recommended that we go away from attempting to have 15 or more board members and instead bring in individuals that may not be able to spend the required time to be on the board, but rather could spend limited and specific time on one or two projects. All agreed that many potential volunteers may be put off by the commitment of the board membership. However a set up with "board advisors" or "coordinators" might function better. This topic will be discussed at the next meeting.

- Tina brought up "Winterizing" the Building when school is out. Can it save us energy or will it be too big of an issue. How do we keep costs down and still maintain the building? For now the plan would be to lower the thermostat and turn off all non-essential equipment.

- Tina Discussed the Finances. As of now we are over budget based on costs from last year and projected revenue through the end of this year. This precipitated a discussion on how to cut additional costs and increase revenue. This will be an ongoing discussion. We decided to stick to the current schedule of offering for the fall including the new Apple Day program. Other than that, it does not appear that we can add additional programs without additional funds to cover costs. In addition, if a program does not attract at least 10 registered people, the program should be canceled. We need to have open communication between event staff and board members (Tina as financial guru?) if questions arise. Budgets for food and miscellaneous items are not to exceed the following amounts:

Apple Day \$25 Leaf Walk \$25 Wreath Workshop \$50

- Joe Discussed the calendar project. He indicated that as of now there are 3 definite sponsors. Several other possible sponsors are out there also. The actual calendar will not take much more time to finish, however unless there is a significant increase in sponsorship, we should not take on the cost of the calendar ourselves. All agreed that unless we have 9 sponsors (\$4,500) to cover the costs by the end of September, the Nature Center can not afford to purchase out of pocket.

- Next meeting October 8, 2008.