

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE  
POPULAR CULTURE ASSOCIATION, Thursday, March 12, 2020.

Acting PCA President / PCA Vice President Sue Matheson called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM Eastern. Secretary Carl Sederholm did a roll call of members and verified that a quorum had been attained.

Voting Members Present: Brenda Boudreau, Gary Burns, Amie Doughty, Beth Downey, Gary Edgerton, Gary Hoppenstand, Kathy Merlock Jackson, Helen Lewis, Sue Matheson, Camille McCutcheon, David Moody, Debby Phillips, David Silverman

Voting Members Absent: Ashley Donnelly, Cynthia Miller

Non-Voting Members Present: Lynn Bartholome, Colleen Karn, Ann Larabee, Mike Marsden, Carl Sederholm, Philip Simpson

Non-Voting Members Absent: None

Also participating: Sheila Yarnell, Liaison from Constant Contact. Sheila participated in deliberations concerning whether or not the April 2020 PCA National Conference should be cancelled.

Opening Remarks: Acting PCA President / PCA Vice President Sue Matheson welcomed everyone to the meeting and then turned things over to Philip Simpson to report on the Emergency Response Subcommittee's work.

Report from PCA Emergency Response Subcommittee—Philip Simpson, Chair / Past President

Much of the business today concerned COVID-19 and how its increasing spread throughout the world may impact the health and safety of PCA members and their families. Philip Simpson, who chaired the PCA Emergency Response Subcommittee, provided the board with a review of the committee's work and their general recommendations. The discussion turned to whether the April 2020, Philadelphia PA conference should be cancelled in light of growing health and safety concerns. Given that many cities, organizations, and businesses are imposing safety restrictions, it was generally agreed that cancelling the meeting would help promote the social distancing recommended by government and health officials.

It was duly moved and seconded that the board should cancel the PCA National Meeting scheduled for April 2020 in Philadelphia, PA because of significant health and safety considerations of its members (and, potentially, of their family members) in light of the declared

COVID-19 pandemic. Because the city of Philadelphia announced on March 12, 2020 a ban on all events bringing together 1,000 or more people, we feel tremendous concern for the health of our members at a large conference like PCA.

The vote on the motion was unanimous, with the results as follows: Yes 14; No 0

Discussion then turned to multiple topics related to the logistics involved in cancelling the conference and how that could impact PCA members going forward. It was generally agreed that the above motion to cancel the conference at this time was the only option. Given the increasing concerns about COVID-19, it would simply be impossible to hold the conference in Philadelphia, PA at this time.

Discussion turned to questions about whether the committee considered postponement of the conference, rather than moving straight to cancellation. Simpson reported that, after much deliberation, the committee determined that uncertainty over COVID-19 and its continued impact on society would make postponement difficult, if not impossible. The health and safety of PCA members is paramount and it is unclear when social concerns over the virus will ease.

Discussion also turned to addressing member concerns because of COVID-19 and its impact on PCA. It was generally agreed that the PCA board should have a contingency plan to address concerns like COVID-19 in a timely manner in the future. Board members also generally agreed that an emergency planning subcommittee should be organized to address this topic more fully. Board members expressed appreciation to Phillip Simpson for his leadership of the subcommittee. The subcommittee members acted quickly and in the best interest of PCA membership. Board members also expressed appreciation to Gary Burns for his leadership of a subcommittee dedicated to addressing member refunds and other related financial concerns. Burns and his committee worked quickly to discover best practices in this matter. Board members also thanked to Lynn Bartholome and her staff for handling member concerns so directly and effectively. Bartholome praised her staff for their hard work and their willingness to put in additional time and effort to help address member concerns over COVID-19.

#### Report from Lynn Bartholome, PCA Executive Director

Bartholome discussed the status of the 2020 guest speakers Terry Gross and Kevin Willmott. Terry Gross is considering attending the Boston 2021 conference. Bartholome will contact Kevin Willmott to follow up with him about participating at the 2021 conference as well. Bartholome then reviewed several other guests / activities that could be pursued for the Boston 2021 conference. She also discussed best strategies for working with booksellers that will be impacted by cancelling the 2020 conference. Discussion then turned to the logistics concerning getting refunds to members.

It was duly moved and seconded that PCA refund members for their registration fees if they request one; they may also apply their fees for the 2020 conference to registration for the 2021 or the 2022 conference. Members may also choose to apply their 2020 registration fees as a donation to the PCA endowment.

The vote was unanimous in favor: Yes 13; No 0.

#### Report on the PCA Endowment

Lynn Bartholome provided a brief report on the state of the endowment in light of recent financial crises.

Bartholome also raised concerns about the timing of the 2020 election for new board members and officers. Elections typically occur just prior to the national conference and so board members wondered if the election period should be modified in light of the conference cancellation.

It was duly moved and seconded that the deadline for nominations for the 2020 elections be changed to April 12, 2020 because of ongoing concerns due to COVID-19.

The vote was unanimous: Yes 13; No 0

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM Eastern Time