

Milton Artists Guild meeting
Art Center

May 17, 2018
10 – noon

Attending: Gisela Alpert, Donna Blatchly, Karen Drennan, Claudette Eaton, Barry Genzlinger, Mary Ann Duffy Godin, Dot Grazier, Cathy LaClair, Christina Lesperance, Richard Lyons, Ray McClure, Lorraine Manley, Dean Moran, Linda Moran, Mike Murray, Bonnie Palmer, Mike Purcell, Linda Stech, Rochelle Wallace, Gary Walz, Mike Wasco, Trine Wilson,

Gisela welcomed the members and attendees introduced themselves.

Mural Project update –Karen Drennan, in her position as the new project coordinator for the Promise Grant, addressed the group. She thanked the guild for their work on the winter kids’ workshops. She said that she would be responsible for promoting and advertising the mural project.

Gisela reiterated that the mural project date was changed from June 16th, so as not to conflict with the high school graduation day, to June 23rd, with June 30 being the rain date. We need volunteers stationed at each of the seven dugouts to provide encouragement and guidance to the young participants. Volunteering at this event is one of the opportunities to maintain the 25% commission rate. Contact Gisela if you would like to sign up.

Bylaws discussion - Gisela introduced Mike Wasco, a MAG member. He is a member of the law firm, Paul Frank & Collins and has been an advisor to the MAG board for the past six months. His specialty is intellectual property. He and Dave Pocius gave a presentation on Copyright Law at the October 2017 guild meeting. Mike authored the revision to the bylaws to be discussed at this meeting. Mike will be on the ballot as a candidate for the board.

Gisela stated that the guild has become a big business and the board felt that we had to reflect these changes.

These proposed bylaws reflect the changes in the guild since moving into the gallery and the increase in membership. The bylaws are reflective of this growth and are written to address future growth. The theory of operation is still there, but the new document makes the board more functional.

Cathy LaClair asked if members had read the bylaws and asked members to voice their concerns.

Discussion points: There was concern whether the membership or the board controlled the group. Cathy said that this is a shifting in procedures, the first document is nebulous and didn’t show who was responsible for making decisions. It was our practice, but never documented; that this is a big shift was acknowledged.

Gisela stated the leadership was elected, and that that we should trust the leadership to do the work.

A couple of members raised points to support this; that membership doesn’t participate by volunteering or voicing opinions, and also that members haven’t been providing information, we need more attendance at our monthly meetings.

The Directors and Officers direct the business in absence of members’ input and action and it is their duty to do this as elected leadership roles

Article 3 - There was discussion regarding the phrase 'member in good standing', and whether it was adequately defined in the bylaws. It was decided that membership responsibilities would be expanded upon as a policy in the handbook. When policies are distributed, members can add input.

Mike said that we had to separate corporate governance from policy descriptions because it's an onerous process to change the bylaws.

New sections 4.5 and 8 address procedure for suspension or revocation of membership and/or office. As a large organization, the board felt that this was an important piece to have in place in the unlikely event that it was needed. Cathy said that is a 'business' now, we have to have formal policies in place.

We aren't just a club for art and brownies. We are structuring MAG like a business and be accountable for our decisions.

Regarding Article 4.1 - A member asked about 'the board putting forth the candidate', versus the current mode where members volunteer to hold positions. Gisela explained that the board would like to add members whose skills which we lack, for example, in law, business experience, and financial accounting. This was one of the recommendations made by Mary Harwood, the consultant hired through the \$2500 Capacity Building grant. Members may still nominate themselves or others.

A member expressed concern that the members were losing control. After discussion, it was decided to add two 'members-at-large' to the board to represent members' points of view. Mike said that he would revise the proposed bylaws to incorporate the suggestion to allow for a minimum of 5, a maximum of 7, and that 2 of those are active guild 'members-at-large'.

Cathy said that most boards are comprised of skilled individual who provide oversight – legal and financial, and sometimes not even members of those organizations.

Article 4.4 – Board terms will be staggered for continuity of experience.

Article 4.5 - There was a question about making the board meetings open, but the idea had been voted down at last year's annual meeting. It was decided that having members-at-large on the board will ensure membership representation.

Article 5 – There was discussion about the wording 'board elects' vs. 'membership elects'. The board 'development committee' replaces 'nominating committee'. The development committee will actively seek out and vet qualified individuals for officers and directors, instead of relying on previous method where a nominating committee was limited to receiving and confirming willing nominees. Members are still free to nominate themselves or others for officers or directors positions.

Gisela asked members to email suggestions and comments regarding the proposed bylaws revisions. There will be a special evening meeting scheduled prior to the annual meeting for additional questions and discussion.

Call to Artists - Linda Moran announced that there will be a joint show between MAG and the Essex Art League at the T.W. Wood Gallery in Montpelier. This is an open call juried show with 50 – 60 pieces needed. Prepare 1 – 2 .jpeg images for consideration. The show will be hung on June 30, from 10 – 2.

The reception is on July 7th. Last year, 5 pieces were sold at the show. The building is not handicapped accessible. Please contact Linda Moran, at marblers2008@gmail.com, for more information.

Staffing update – Interviews are still being conducted. June 1st is the start date.

There will still be numerous opportunities to volunteer to take advantage of the lower commission rate on art sales, which may include gallery hours alongside the paid staff to help on busy sales days. Gisela will send out a detailed description of opportunities, including helping out on Mural Project day, hosting workshops, among others.

Made in Vermont bus tour – June 19 – The tour bus will include a stop at the MAG gallery. Donna Blatchly has been asked to give a demonstration of her art. We hope to have additional artists give demonstrations as well. There will be refreshments.

Ellen Young's gallery painting – Requests have been made to purchase giclée prints and posters. Ellen has given her permission, and as the painting is now the property of the MAG, the question of whether to print giclée copies was put to a vote. The motion passed.

Nominating committee – Deborah Dolby and Claire Payne will be doing the honors. The consultant, Mary Harwood, is working on job descriptions of the officers and directors positions. These will be emailed to the members along with instructions for nominating yourself or others to the ballot. Write-ups about the nominees will be provided to the members, and a meeting will be scheduled to get to know the candidates prior to the vote at the annual meeting.

Plein Air – On June 2nd at Clair Payne's farm in Georgia, with Corliss Blakely. The pieces created will be displayed in the MAG gallery. Please sign up on the MAG website, workshop page.

Open Studio Weekend – May 26 & 27 – If you are available to either do a demonstration, or to be available to talk with visitors about your art, please contact Gisela. The scheduled hours are from 10 – 5; but part time participation is also welcome.

Respectfully submitted by Christina Lesperance