** NEST Board Meeting**

​**October 28, 2021 Minutes**

**Present**: Cris Riedel, Lynn Schweikart, Rona Leventhal, Barbara Aliprantis, ChaChanna Simpson, Stephanie Tassinari, Chris Donnald, Jim Brule

**Meeting Start:** 6:30pm

**Call to Order**

**Motion to approve the September Minutes: Approved (6-0)** Motion by Cris, Seconded by Barbara

**Consent Agenda**

* Reports needed discussion **Motion to approve submitted reports** **Approved (6-0)** Motion by Jim, Seconded by Barbara

**President’s Report**

* Lynn updated the board that Steph and Lori have quickly stepped into the new roles. The organization continues to be in good financial standing. ChaChanna and Barbara have been putting together new programs including a happy hour on Nov 3. Linda has been working on putting together NEST Fest2. Cris has been looking into how to use the benevity fund and thank Elsa Zuniga and Google. The Board Retreat has been shaping up nicely with gathering groups for the leadership panel.

**Update on Transition**

* No update from Steph

**STF 2022**

* Rona gave an update on STF and that the theme has been chosen and the keynote has been contracted. Chris and Steph helped get the webpage up and an announcement out to the membership. It was decided a $35 honorarium would be given to the Olio Tellers. The next steps are to get the technology setup and start working on the logistics. Rona wants to invite the two speakers from 2020 who were unable to present to attend for free in 2022. Rona also brought up that there needs to be a discussion around Covid protocols. Whether this means only vaccinated participants or proof of a recent PCR test. The hotel does not have its own Covid protocol. Barbara suggested proof of a vaccination and a booster. Jim brought up having STF follow the current CDC guidelines at the time of the event to allow for flexibility while maintaining an expectation for attendees. Jim offered to look into the systems that are in use right now to come up with a recommendation. Jim brought up the logistics that will go into requiring vaccines and how to check for that. Lynn and Rona decided that there needs to be a committee for outreach for STF. Barbara made a note that there should be a statement of expectations in regards to Covid safety. Jim suggested the verbiage “We intend to provide a safe environment; we will be monitoring CDC recommendations. Stay tuned”

**NEST Funding Policy and Benevity**

* Lynn let the board know that the Benevity fund is the money from Google that Elsa Zuniga designated as her choice for her employee contributions. There was a discussion with Lynn, Cris, and Jim where it was reiterated that NEST does not financially help with the promotion/running of any personal programs. Lynn had let Elsa know that NEST is very thankful for the continued contributions from the Benevity Fund. There is currently $5300 in the account and Lynn reached out to Elsa to see if she had any ideas on how to spend the fund. The finance committee also determined that there would be line items in the budgets for long-term projects. Rona asked about clarifications on the funds restrictions of which there are none.

**Board Retreat**

* The panel is shaping up and so far there are five people on the panel. Sara Armstrong is unable to make it before 2PM PST. Lynn asked the board their thoughts on the timing of when to hold the panel. Cris suggested having it in the afternoon to account for different West Coast participants. Lynn didn’t know if there should maybe be two separate groups and times determined by the final number of panelists. It was determined that the retreat will be completely virtual. Different topics of conversations were discussed. Chris will join for any discussion in regards to the website. Lynn suggested that the Panel Discussion be recorded for future reference. Jim suggested that the description of the panel be changed to “Leadership Summit”. Rona suggested reaching out to Jay Allenson from The Moth. Jim objected to the idea of having the Moth present at the summit because they are a corporate organization and have a completely different background and focus than on the promotion of storytellers and storytelling. Cris and Barbara agreed with this sentiment. ChaChanna had a counterpoint that while NEST is not trying to model their organization, they might provide some insight into how to attract people to the organization despite the fact that they are for-profit. Jim pitched the idea of reaching out to Story-Center out of Berkley which is an organization based around teaching people how to tell self-stories. Rona also asked about inviting the Connecticut Storytelling Organization. Cris and Rona had brought up how this originally started about getting best practices from regional organizations for a regional organization. It was decided that with the current amount on confirmed attendees, to have less people at the upcoming Board Retreat Panel and depending on how it goes, plan for a future larger panel. ChaChanna brought up how it was difficult to get a commitment without having a firm time for when the panel was going to be held. It was decided to shoot for a time of 11am-1pm EST for the panel.

**Governance**

* Lynn had spoken to Cris and Jim who are willing to serve another term on the board. **Motion to reelect Jim and Cris to the board (6-0)** Motion by Barbara, Seconded by ChaChanna

**Outreach**

* ChaChanna gave an updated on the first NEST Happy Hour happening on Nov 3. Steph had sent out a notice, Cris sent out to the WVSG listserv, and another reminder will be sent out the day before. There is a push to have as many board members there as possible. ChaChanna also gave an update on the mentorship program. A list of qualifications had been developed that will be used to gather a group of mentors for any new mentees. Rona wanted to make sure that there was a statement that this would not be a coaching role. Barbara assured that there was a clear distinction that is going to be made ahead of time in the call for mentors. This will be a position to walk alongside a newcomer rather than a teaching role. ChaChanna listed the next steps and that the “guidelines” will be fleshed out.

**Program**

* Linda was wondering whether new comer storyteller showcase performers should be paid, keeping in mind that the event is meant to be free for members. Rona brought up that since it is a showcase, the performers should not be made. Lynn mentioned that the benefit is the ability to perform in this showcase rather than monetary payment. Everyone agreed that these performers should not be given monetary compensation. Linda also wanted to know whether this event should become an annual thing. Cris agreed that it should as long as it stayed a lighter event that does not require a lot of resources.
* The Social Justice Performance committee is holding a charity performance at the end of November. The resources committee is working on creating an online presence. There has yet to be an update from the Social Justice Training Committee. The group as a whole is meeting on the 2nd of November at 6:30 PM.
* FLY-Lynn is going to reach out to see about some member interest in running the FLY! program.
* STF 2023/2024- There was a brief discussion in looking into other parts of New England to hold future STF programs.

**Tech**

* The questions that Chris had submitted were briefly discussed. The first being that ex members with current pages will be contacted before removing them from the “Hire a Teller” page. The status of the website will be discussed at the Board Retreat.
* ChaChanna also briefly asked about removing admin privileges from people from the Facebook page.

**New Business**

* None to report

**Old Business**

* None to report

Next Meeting: December 9, at 6:30pm

**Motion to adjourn (6-0)** Motion by Cris, Seconded by Barbara

Meeting Adjourned