NESEA Board Meeting Conference Call - Minutes
MARCH 16, 2017

Participating
Michael Bruss
Damainique Bruce (non-voting Board member)
Saheel Chandrani
Martine Dion
Paul Eldrenkamp
Jenna Ide
Phil Kaplan
Jennifer Marrapese
Rob Meyers
Lauren Brust Moss
Fortunat Mueller
Rick Renner
John Skipper
Ben Southworth
Lisa Tallet

Not Participating

The Board Conference Call convened at 9:05 AM.

ED Report – Jennifer

There were 2,319 registered for BE17, about the same as last year. Until final cost figures are in, cannot give the final results. Miriam, Beth, and Jennifer worked hard to reduce expenses; while managing by expense reduction is not ideal, it helped. The conference does not seem to be growing, and it may be worth looking at reducing the format for next year. Perhaps it should be shorter, and perhaps we should look at a different venue.

Also looking at an ILFI track for BE18.

Phil noted that the Seaport reports that all conferences are down, across the board; this is not specific to our “industry”. Jennifer has heard something similar. Martine noted that there are more conferences to choose from.

Overall, it was agreed that the energy at the conference was fantastic. Most of the feedback from exhibitors was very positive. The new layout seemed well received, though the side aisle further from the eating area was a little less well attended and active. Lauren noted that there were some complaints about the plumbing truck in that side aisle. Traffic may be down, according to some exhibitors, but the quality of the interaction and leads are high. Jennifer noted that twelve exhibitors signed up for BE18. Fortunat said that one exhibitor has the best conversations of the year at BE17. Exhibitors praised the work of the staff in helping them sign up, coordinate deliveries, and work out any problems.
Some volunteers felt they should have been given meal vouchers.

Regarding switching to a small venue, Jennifer noted that we have already issued an RFP for the current size. We could revise the RFP, but we would have to act quickly. We may be at the Seaport one more year. Michael said that reducing venue size for next year seems too rushed.

Michael also noted that the BE the Future lunch was very invigorating; the program represents significant potential.

Ben noted that whatever the trends and problems, if we net around $110,000, that’s not so bad. If this is lower than budgeted, we may have to adjust the budget.

Damainique found attendees to be very positive; she noted one comment that NESEA should focus on community engagement and membership. Saheel said it was his first Boston conference; he enjoyed the energy, the sense of community, and welcoming feeling. Jenna said we might want to think about ways to increase social interaction. Martine wondered if attendees could get one or two drink vouchers.

Paul noted that from the strategic perspective, BE Boston is the place where important conversations in our region happen, at a high level and with a good deal of forward thinking. We should work to support these conversations, and curating content is a key to this. Martine was very impressed by the content of the two plenary sessions.

**Vote: To adjourn the meeting. Rick made the motion, and Rob seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.**

Phone call adjourned at approximately 9:30 AM.

The next Board meeting will be a conference call at 9:00 AM on April 13, 2017.

Attachments: None

Notes prepared by Rick Renner and Ben Southworth