Minutes for NESEA Board Meeting
October 11, 2017
TKP Center, 109 West 39th Street, New York, NY 10018
11:00-5:00

Participating
Michael Bruss
Jenna Ide
Jennifer Marrapese
Rob Meyers
Ben Southworth
John Skipper
Saheel Chandrani

Not Participating
Paul Eldrenkamp
Fortunat Mueller
Lauren Brust Moss
Phil Kaplan
Rick Renner
Miriam Aylward
Devan Folts

Call to Order
Phil Kaplan called the meeting to order at 11:00.

Review of Minutes from May 20, June 8, July 6, August 10, and September 7, 2017
Approval of minutes. Rick moved. Michael seconded. May 20, June 8, July 6, August 10, September 7, 2017

Daminique Bruce has resigned from the board.
Cindy due at 2:30.
Martine unable to attend due to family circumstances.

Executive Director Report and Finance Committee Report – Jennifer and Paul
Jennifer shared some updates to the ED report before starting the conversation. 9 Board members have made pledges to the Capacity Campaign. Just over $50,000 pledged so far.

Happy with how we ended FY17. Ended with a loss of $5500 but budgeted a $30,000 loss. We included a new component on page 18 to include gross margin and profit margin as a suggestion from Tom Konrad on the Finance Committee. General update on attendees, sponsorships and exhibitors.

Miriam: BENYC is mature from an attendance and revenue standpoint. 50% of attendees tend to be new. Systems and marketing and content are dialed in. The piece of the puzzle she wants to work on is how to match the space to the event if it is indeed mature. How do we match the space and continue to make it a revenue generator. Miriam has a new space to consider that is owned by NYU-The Kimmel Center. Staff have toured the space already. It is cheaper and has better daylighting. An attachment to NYU might get us new members and attendees as well as potentially some fundraising. General conversation among the board ensued regarding ways to tweak BENYC to improve it. Lauren mentioned that a high profile keynote might help increase draw. John thinks cost for attendance can be massaged.

Jennifer gave a shout out to her staff for the work they’ve done collecting and analyzing data regarding the conference.

Jennifer closed out the report saying that BENYC will not hit the net target they budgeted for and she wants to think about how to make up for that loss. Other programs look to be on budget or better.

Michael asked Miriam for update on BEBL. 5 full groups. No turnover this year. Interest generated so we have a waiting list. Who is the next facilitator? How do we add staff support to that so that we can consider launching a 6th or 7th group. Unconference on the 15th of September. Great day. Attendees set the agenda when they get there… there was a small survey ahead of time … hosted by Antioch in Keene NH. Gave folks assigned seating so they could meet folks they hadn’t met before. Folks wanted to continue the conversation. Want work groups on diversity and inclusion, architects lounge. Steering committee meeting will discuss the path forward given that what we have is working. General discussion
ensued about profitability of the program and process. A few board members inquired how we can get BEBL participation from NYC.

**Board Self-Assessment Report and Next Steps – Lauren**

Responses were consistent - which means we're all on the same page. Folks are really committed to NESEA. Board members feel they gain from association with NESEA. Consistently everybody asked for improvement around understanding the financial commitment to the board, general NESEA finances and learning how to help with fundraising. In 2016 36% of board members contributed as private citizens (not their business) cash to the board. To date for 2017 64% has contributed money to the board. We need 100% giving. Attendance has been 84%-85%.

Questions of concern… where folks need to improve are around preparing for Board Meetings, recruiting others to serve, and opportunities to learn and grow as a board member. Phil pointed out the board responsibilities to share progress on Strategic Plan goals… folks don't seem prepared to do this. General conversation ensued about what areas the board needs to learn to be better board members. Lauren summed up the conversation saying that she felt the responses were very encouraging and that our next steps in this regard beyond financial commitment and fundraising was to have a better financial understanding of NESEA.

**Consideration of Slate for Board Election – Jenna Ide**

Nominating committee. Working on the on-boarding process and the slate for next round. Also a possible Board alumni luncheon. Didn’t reach out for additional candidates for fall election in 2017. Timing isn’t right for a number of potential candidates on our roster to run for the board. Board needs to carve out time to discuss potential candidates so that the list is more robust. The list can also be used for committees. Need to make more time in person. Directors up for re-election Phil, Fortunat, Jenna, Saheel and Cindy. Every year membership elects three, board appoints one. This year we’ll also be appointing a membership services liaison for a 3-year term.

Motion: Rob Meyers moved and Rick seconded approval of the following slate of candidates for the board election: Phil Kaplan, Fortunat Mueller, Cindy Malinchak, Saheel Chandrani, and Jenna Ide. Motion carried unanimously.

**50 Miles Street Discussion – Michael Bruss**

MB shared information on 50 Miles Street property to help BOD make a decision on its future in December. Cost of owning the building after revenue is $10,300. Cost to rent if the building is sold would be $30,700. JM shared the distraction and anxiety around maintaining and administration of the building. General discussion ensued regarding the relative merits of keeping the building. MB shared that we need at least 500,000 – 1,000,000 to get the building up to shape. A capital campaign would be a distraction at the moment. JM concerned that NESEA doesn’t have the capacity to do this work. PE shared that the 50 Miles Street Committee has considered all of these questions. MB wants to convene a conference call to continue this conversation and present a recommendation at the December board meeting on how to proceed.

**Strategic Plan Updates**

**Ben & Lauren - Goal 1:** Miriam shared that she has updated job descriptions for committees, content curation stuff. In the next 6 months she’ll have job description for volunteer coordinator, post videos of BE NYC sessions and get Marc Rosenbaum’s ZNEH class online.

This from Miriam: Job titles are still in draft form. We have a couple versions of the different curation committees that exist for Boston and NYC. It’s been critical to develop titles, and try to make them consistent between Boston and NYC as much as possible. We hope to have final job descriptions by the end of the year. For Pro Tours and BuildingEnergy magazine, we’re assembling committees based on invitations sent out to members, and using the opportunity to participate as a way to engage people who want to get more involved. We are being clear and strict that participation is limited to members only. This is a collaboration between event staff and membership, as well as communications helping us to craft that message.
**Rick - Goal 2:** Spoke with Katie this week. She has made the list of priorities and actions around guiding work toward C and I. Katie is working with other staff… an example of this is that they are encouraging C & I Pr Tour proposals. Katie is going to the NH Schools Summit sponsored by the NEEP. Rick offered to go speak with NEEP about future collaboration.

**Saheel - Goal 3:** Thrilled with Flo and her work so far. One quick stat she shared: last year we had 10 EPs show up to BE Boston for a free tradeshow pass. 4 of those 10 applied and received scholarships for career forum today at BE NYC. Close to 50 attendees projected at today's career forum. Membership categories for emerging professional (EP). Very steady significant rise of membership by this category. We have a job board on our website. People started to take advantage of a resume bank to dovetail with the job bank. Saheel has a few goals to share later when fully articulated.

**Jenna - Goal 4:** Overlap between Goal 1 and Goal 4. Survey of members regarding interest among membership for volunteers. Jenna feels like we need more time to think about the pathway to engagement. Do we need a logging system for volunteers? Need to think through the difficulty of creating an online system. Perhaps a survey might be easier. By Q3 Next year.

**Jennifer (for Cindy) - Goal 5:** Cindy has contacts in Philly, Pittsburgh and New Jersey. More work in NYC and surrounding Boroughs. Cindy to think about which areas she’d like to focus on first. JM to do a road trip with Cindy to meet local folks who might be good partners for Pro Tours on this type of work. Seem to be on track on timeline.

**Paul - Goal 6 Advocacy:** Paul and Damainique identified organizations this spring and summer to set up a group of like-minded organizations to meet to share ideas. DB was working to identify a building to host the meeting. JM was staff connection. PE and JM have to regroup on how to continue the work in DB’s departure. 20 groups… 75% of the groups responded with interest. Once we had a venue, a time and a core group, we could invite other groups.

**Phil & Lauren - Goal 7:** Board Assessment was a huge part of working on this goal. Reviewing Strategic Plan goals and timelines are a part of this work which we’re doing right now. Board on-boarding for new members was a strategy. JS agreed to help mentor Cindy.

**Capacity Campaign – Devan and Rob**
- review of materials
- role-playing/getting comfortable w/the board's role
- brainstorming/commitment by board members on who they are willing to approach

Devan started with an overview of her agenda. Reminded BOD of the need for creating a culture of Philanthropy. If you believe in the mission you must raise the money to fund the mission. Reviewed Timeline. Shared the ramping up of the annual appeal. Have yet to ask folks for a 3 year commitment in order not to muddy the waters. Thought it’d be better to do stewardship calls afterwards to catch folks up on progress to date. Rob would like 100% board commitment.

General conversation ensued regarding how much money we’ve raised to date (50k), how many donors that represents (50), how many asks have been made (140 - folks who have committed $100 or more), $100-$9000 span of giving … why the appeal happens now (tax write offs), confusion around the 3-year recurring ask. JM and DF heard that the 3 year commitment was important to some members. Monthly automatic deposits were discussed as a strategy as well as asking donors to pay cc costs. Marc Rosenbaum is helping bring together a focus group of legacy members to help with an ask. Reminder that we need to raise $130,000 this year even though our goal is only $100,000 because we usually raise $30,000 with the annual appeal.

**Moves Management – Devan shared an engagement trajectory for NESEA:** Awareness, Interest, Involvement, Investment and Stewardship. Make a list of specific actions that you can do individually … how to engage folks who are in the Interest stage of engagement. Use Prospect Tracker Sheet.
Distinction between a pledge and a gift. FM pointed out that most BOD mostly does the first three items on the list but we really need to learn more about how to do the last two items.

BOD spent 5 minutes brainstorming individual lists. General conversation by BOD regarding anxiety around asking folks already asked, as well as the importance of follow ups to thank givers. CRM database could be used for tracking... Written policy about who has access to donor information. Anonymity is important.

Devan continued on to planning the ask.... Review of Case/talking points, Crafting my NESEA story, Role playing/practicing the ask. What value do you get from NESEA. BOD spent 5 minutes filling out the Build your own Elevator Pitch. BOD then practiced the pitch.

General discussion around membership and retention of members and review of role playing. JM reminded folks that when you ask for a number make sure it is big enough that it makes you gulp.

Capacity Campaign will reach out to board to follow up and brainstorm prospect lists and to support board to make one ask from their network by December 15th.

What are the mechanics around getting the money from donor to NESEA. CC JM or DF on an email to thank them for the commitment and let them know that JM or DF will follow up. If there are additional materials, BOD members might need contact Devan.

Kickstarter campaign was mentioned. Planned giving is a new idea for fundraising coming down the pipe.

Selling/Fundraising is the transfer of enthusiasm.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:52 by Fortunat, Rob seconded. Unanimously approved.

Concluded at 4:52