

# Timber Framers Guild Board

## Face to Face Meeting<sup>1</sup>

January 17 - 20, 2008

Gibson's Inn, Annapolis, MD

### Thursday 1/17, 5:00 pm

In attendance:

Board Members: Brenda Baker, Sandy Bennett, Leon Buckwalter, Rick Collins, Chris Gunn, Whit Holder, Grigg Mullins, Curtis Milton

Staff: Will Beemer, Sue Warden, Ken Rower, Joel McCarty (scribe for Thursday only)

As is our long-standing custom, participants are polled to reveal their particular interests and initiatives in Guild work for the coming year, and for longer time lines.

Whit Holder -Promote the training of professional timber framers. Convert younger members to long-term members. Strong interest in understanding changes in the membership numbers, and increasing same.

- Grigg Mullen: Projects and Education especially in his region.
- Curtis Milton: Diversity of offerings at accessible costs. Maintaining our position, and not going backward.
- Rick Collins: Integration of Project Management training. Keeping the trade viable and durable. Create something to attract all shop members, not just owners. A global view and stance is required. Work toward Federal accreditation of an apprenticeship program. Rick will continue a backseat role in Projects
- Chris Gunn: Parallels to Whit's comments. Looking for greater membership involvement and leadership in the Nominations process. We need more views, not necessarily younger views.
- Leon Buckwalter: Keep on writing. Revitalize Membership Committee. Encourage the observed trend of younger membership. In-house project liaison.
- Brenda Baker: Moving the Guild to the next level. More professionalism, both internally and externally. Determine how to include and involve more of the guys in the shops in Guild events.
- Will Beemer: More work on publications. Member retention and financial accessible Sponsor

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<sup>1</sup> These minutes were approved at the Board Meeting of Feb. 6, 2008, by Milton, Buckwalter, Mullen, Bennett, Anderson, Collins.

growth is fundamental.

- Joel: More great projects, run more smoothly, in more great places. Much higher level of Board involvement in Guild work, especially at the Committee level.
- Sue Warden: More committee involvement, especially in Finance, Membership and Projects. Anticipating her new office space. Needs a new laptop.
- Ken Rower: Publications can assist with all of these goals above. Use publications to promote these agendas, please. Looking for incremental publications improvement and no backsliding. Barn Book needs a champion. Timber Framing for Beginners is a publication in need of development. We know there is a demand.
- Al Anderson: Education Committee to increase its activity and impact. Align TFG events and presentations with the curriculum outline. (Al joined us at 5:55 pm.)

Here followed an extended and animated publications discussion.

Reviewed Board Handbook and Meeting Packet and current Board term expiration dates.

Terms expiring on 12/31/2008

Curtis Milton – subject to current two consecutive term limit policy.

Chris Gunn – available to run again.

Leon Buckwalter- subject to current two consecutive term limit policy

Directors subject to term limits policy (and terms ending) as of 12/31/2009

Grigg Mullen

Rick Collins

Brenda Baker

After much discussion, by consensus, the following Executive Officers were elected:

- Curtis Milton - President
- Chris Gunn - Vice President
- Rick Collins - Treasurer
- Brenda Baker - Clerk

Proposed for officers in 2009:

- Rick Collins - President
- Sandy Bennett - Treasurer

Discussion of By-Laws and formation of a By-Laws Committee: Chair Ken Rower, Brenda Baker Committee will write a Mission Statement and submit to the next BoD meeting for approval. Ken will talk with Susan Witter regarding membership on the committee.

Agenda Review. General discussion and minor revisions

General discussions:

Committee reporting to BoD, in writing prior to BoD meetings

Status of the bi-annual report project – unknown

Committee structure

Broad and animated discussions followed.

Tim Chauvin, Rudy Christian and Dick Schmidt have asked to be released from the Membership Committee.

Discussion of Committee Structure, Function and Mission.

The Board will consider assigning qualitative goals to each committee

Brief discussion of HR Committee's responsibilities

Longer discussion of the ED evaluation process

Is a 2-day F2F long enough? No conclusion or change in the current system at this time. It will be revisited.

Adjourn 9:09 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joel McCarty

**Friday, 1/18, 8:30 am**

Present:

Board Members: Al Anderson, Brenda Baker, Sandy Bennett, Leon Buckwalter, Rick Collins, Chris Gunn, Whit Holder, Curtis Milton, Grigg Mullins.

Staff: Will Beemer, Joel McCarty, Ken Rower, Sue Warden

The group reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Board members. A formal Board package will be coming to each member as well as a packet to be used by the Nominating Committee for recruiting potential Board members.

We discussed the Directors & Officers insurance policy that covers liability and malfeasance that is in place. There is a two signature policy for checks that are \$10,000 or higher.

Board members compensation – At Board meetings, meals are covered, alcohol is not.

**ACTION ITEM:** Joel and Will are to clarify the terminology for compensation and reimbursement of Board members.

Discussed the Sarbanes/Oxley law and how it applies to the Guild and the membership meetings.

Reviewed the By Law's meeting guidelines and the membership meetings at Guild conferences.

Confirmed that the meetings are in compliance with current legal meeting requirements.

Discussed officers' responsibilities. Is it appropriate for the Board treasurer to have signature capability? Determined that it could be beneficial under certain circumstances.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Joel will check to see if there is a legal reason to leave the surety bond as part of the

position description for the Board treasurer.

Are there any policies or requirements recommended by the auditor?

## Rental Agreements

An accounting procedure manual needs to be written that documents formal accounting policies and procedures. Need to have copies of deposit tickets and checks received against invoices.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Will and Joel will write up rental agreements for their office spaces and have in place by next Board meeting. A policies and procedure manual will be written and in place by the May audit.

Discussed Board member Term Limits – the current policy is two to three terms with one year off before being eligible to run again. Should there be lifetime term limits? Talked about whether it would be limiting and/or increasing potential experience on the Board, increasing opportunities for more members to serve on the Board. Discussed a potential Advisory Council of interested members that would not have voting rights. It could offer an opportunity for expert advice and increased relationships with other organizations. Decided there would be no changes in the term limit policies.

Talked about expanding the collaborative relationship with Carpenters Fellowship and the Guild that could increase the educational sharing between the two groups. Bill Keir was mentioned as a possible representative from CF since he has been a regular attendee at the Guild conferences.

**ACTION ITEM:** Al, Brenda and Whit will come up with a clear plan and purpose for developing a connection with Carpenters Fellowship.

Reviewed the nominations process and when is the best time for the voting to take place. Voting should take place earlier in the year to allow elected Board members to have pertinent Board information sooner that would allow more time for preparation. It would also help the Guild office schedule. The current schedule is nominations closed by October 1, materials from candidates submitted by Oct. 15, ballots go out November 1, voting completed by December 25.

**ACTION ITEM:** Nominations committee will develop a proposal for nominations with a new schedule and procedure guidelines.

## BUDGET

There was a general review of the 2007 budget and an assessment of the 2008 budget. Determined that Camp Letts is included in the Conferences line items and what the expected net revenue will be. Discussed budget details. Current budget does not include staff compensation increase. Talked about possible incentives. More discussion and review before the 2008 budget is approved.

**ACTION ITEM:** Will – Put together a proposal and plan for incentives for the Conference Coordinator to increase compensation and conference income/sponsorships.

Discussed sponsorships and if we should adjust our sponsorship offerings. Reviewed lifetime memberships and the long-term effect they have on the budget. Adjusted the membership dues line item in the budget.

ACTION ITEM: Sue – Calculate the breakdown of member’s dues for all member services.

ACTION ITEM: Rick – research and analyze the Lifetime membership values and sustainability.

Lunch

## TFBC

Pamela Hinton, new Timber Frame Business Council Executive Director, joins us and presents her ideas for what will be happening with the Business Council. She is looking forward to increased collaboration between the Guild and the Business Council. She will be writing a Business Council column for each *Scantlings* as has been done in the past. Discussed the importance of the Trade show at Guild conferences to both the Business Council and the Guild. She will be working to make sure that is a positive event and to improve the organization systems.

## Publications

Reviewed the Publications budget. Ken has a printer that can reduce the printing costs while maintaining the quality. Publications committee will review *Scantlings* distribution models to determine if there are other methods of getting *Scantlings* out to the members, such as on line.

ACTION ITEM: Ken – Reduce the *Timber Framing* journal printing from 2,200 copies to 2,000. Publications committee will report on potential distribution methods for *Scantlings*.

## Membership

How do we retain members and also increase membership? Discussed membership drives or incentives to bring old and new members to events. Ideas included having a mentor assigned to new conference attendees, name tags that would identify first time conference attendees, phone calls or emails to non renewing members.

ACTION ITEM: Membership Committee – develop a letter to new members listing member opportunities.

Discussed international events and the cost of conducting them in other countries including Canada and how to optimize the varying exchange rates with the fluctuating dollar.

ACTION ITEM: Joel – investigate the appropriate and relevant system for pricing to allow for optimum currency exchanges.

## Projects

Curtis restated and reminded that Projects are to fulfill the educational purpose, mandate and mission of the Timber Framers Guild. Joel will be forwarding prospective projects to the Educational Committee for review and confirmation that the educational element is adequately and appropriately included in all projects.

Discussed how the curriculum can be applied to projects.

- Use the curriculum outline
- Standardize it at the appropriate level.
- Assessment (theory and practical). Testing can be conducted.

There was discussion regarding the process for recruitment and determining where projects will take place. Joel described how a potential project becomes a reality. The Guild only does projects for non-profits, not commercial groups. Project guidelines are available on the Guild website. The most successful projects are those that have local heroes.

How much lead time is spent developing a project before we have received a scope of work?

Discussed options for getting projects through the system. Joel will work on getting more details early in the discussion. Talked about the need to have a design and a source of funding when a potential project initially comes to the Guild. Joel wants to come up with a method of determining early whether a project is viable. Funding is a major factor in that happening.

Discussed how projects are included in the annual budget including income and expenses. Discussed the Project Coordinator (PC) position, its purpose, importance, and future viability. Adjusted the PC line item in the budget to pro-rate the PC expense to current projects included in the budget. The balance of the PC's time will be allocated to project development.

**ACTION ITEM:** Joel – Set project targets and guidelines for measuring success both in the financial and educational perspective.

## Curriculum

Will presented a thorough update on the current state of the curriculum (attached). He has been working with Austin Parsons, an educator in Halifax who is helping him determine the curriculum goals. He is talking with others who are interested in working on the curriculum content. Al Wallace is writing content on enclosures. Will has created a template for collecting, organizing, and publishing a prospective skill in the curriculum outline.

Brian Ward, who has been working on the curriculum in 2007, will be visiting the Becket office February 15 – 17 to work with Will on including what he has written for Trade Sciences portion. Will needs authors for the Trade Practices sub-topics.

Timber Framing Techniques – Will is planning on using previously written articles to apply them to chapter headings. Some of the skills for this chapter will be taught at the rendezvous at Camp Letts with supporting articles written, filmed or documented for the curriculum. Rick suggested that the

Guild investigate a federally approved apprenticeship program that would allow for opportunities for expanded qualifications and certifications for Guild members.

Discussed curriculum distribution and how that will be done. Safety module is almost complete.

ACTION ITEM: Will – research apprenticeship registration.

Dinner

Discussed Camp Letts, August 18 – 24<sup>th</sup>, the events that will take place and the organization of it.

Some of the skills that will possibly be offered are:

- Scaffolding
- Fork lift
- First Aid
- Fall Protection

Discussed in more detail scaffolding training and the best system to offer the training and certification.

ACTION ITEM: Will – call the Scaffolding Training Institute to determine what the options are and whether it would be most efficient to send prospective trainees to Texas at the STI campus or to bring a trainer to Camp Letts.

## TTRAG Symposium

Discussed the conference March 14 – 16, in Shepardstown, WV. Schedule and program is posted on the website.

Adjourned at 9:30 pm.

**Saturday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. 9:00 am**

All Friday participants in attendance.

Reviewed Friday's action items. Discussed what the interest rate and return on investment would be for a \$1,500 lifetime membership. How do we best invest the lifetime membership dollars?

ACTION ITEM: Will – discuss and research with the accountant how and where we should put the lifetime memberships.

Discussed again the cost of member services including the Journal. Currently the Journal costs \$5 per person per issue. There is an option to subscribe to the Journal without being a TFG member. That rate is currently \$35. Discussed the number of outside subscriptions that would be needed to cover the cost the Journal, along with advertising,

Discussed cost of general Guild operations. Joel showed the current cost of staff ratio to total revenue.

Have gone from 19.5% to 25%. Other non-profits are in the 40% - 60% range.

ACTION ITEM: Sue – calculate a breakdown of the budget by service or profit centers.

Talked about what went into the fixed overhead category on the budget. Some of the items are insurance and rentals. The budget has details for each line item that can be easily viewed.

10:00 – Adjourned for Executive Director Evaluations

5:00 Reconvened following ED Evaluations.

## Budget

Discussed reassessing the budget and adjusting the numbers to include previously discussed changes and also adding potential salary adjustments.

ACTION ITEM: – Reassess the budget to adjust numbers to reflect edits that were discussed at the F2F for review and approval at the next Board call on 2/6 @ 7:00 EST.

Dinner

9:00 pm Reconvened. Laura Viklund joined us for Blue Sky discussion.

Talked about a permanent Guild home and the viability and need of having a Guildhall. There was encouragement to consider a building that could be a location for Guild projects, training sessions, and Guild events.

ACTION ITEM: Whit will canvass and talk with other Guild members to get more opinions on whether this is something of interest.

## Development

Curtis has been talking with a group regarding current investments and future gifts. There was discussion on how to raise money for long-term investment opportunities such as an endowment. There was ongoing discussion on how an endowment would be used, where it would be located, and how and who would determine the expenditures. There was discussion regarding a fund raising campaign or some type of additional contributions to support curriculum development. More funds will be needed to complete some of the more expensive modules. There was talk of raising money for specific purposes, such as the Barn Book or the curriculum for example. (The Barn Book is 75% completed.)

ACTION ITEM: Will & Ken – review and research royalty agreements for future Guild books.

ACTION ITEM: Curtis – call Aaron Sturgis to locate photos for the barn book.

Adjourned at 10:45 pm

Sunday, 1/20 8:00 am

## Apprenticeship Program

Further discussed an apprenticeship program that would comply with Department of Labor requirements. Will has an action item to do further research on the apprenticeship program.

Rick Collins has formed a task force to research information and possible grant funding for developing an apprenticeship program. Current members are Rick Collins, Leon Buckwalter, Whit Holder, Rocco Bellabuono.

Curtis revisited 2008 Board, ED and Guild goals and the purpose of setting them. Discussed the importance of accurate reporting of time spent and time tracking for EDs. Efficient use of time is important to complete the goals. Clarified goal: What is needed to reach the end result. Discussion of how a program is assessed and how a goal is measured. Concluded that the committees will have a deliberate focus of their goals and purposes.

Talked about whether ethical standards for Guild membership are valid or appropriate. Decision was to maintain the current status and not add a 'standard clause' to the bylaws or membership guidelines.

Reviewed the action items.

Adjourned at 10:00 am.