

Approved at the Board Meeting of Feb 4, 2009

Timber Framers Guild
Board of Directors
Face to Face Meeting
1-15-09
Baker House
Blissfield, Michigan
9:20 pm

In Attendance

Directors –Al Anderson, Brenda Baker, Sandy Bennett, Whit Holder, John Miller,
Adrian Jones, Chris Gunn, Grigg Mullen

Absent – Rick Collins (in transit)

Staff – Will Beemer, Joel McCarty, Ken Rower

Chris Gunn officiated and opened the meeting since the slate of officers havenot been ratified for this year and in the absence of a standing president. He thanked everyone for making the trip to Michigan and thanked the Bakers for hosting us for the weekend. He tasked everyone with making this next year effective, efficient, productive, and successful for the Guild and its members.

The Board members were asked what their goals for 2009 are and what they would like to see for the Guild this next year and the future.

Chris' main goal is to become more heavily involved with HR this year.

Whit Holder - would like to become more knowledgeable about the finances of the Guild, continue working toward the apprenticeship program and see that up and running by the end of the year, and have another successful rendezvous. He would like to get a rendezvous committee started.

Brenda Baker - would like to get more of the shop guys involved. It may mean the Guild going to the shops. Also to help make the Executive Committee of the Board more effective to make the Board more efficient.

Grigg Mullen– I feel like I've been the southern ambassador for the Guild. Would like to continue to organize projects and expand timber framing in the south. Also one of the primary ambassadors of the Guild to the Carpenter's Fellowship.

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Al Anderson – Would like to see the rendezvous concept become successful. If the regional projects like Grigg organizes in VA could happen across the country, the Guild would not have to work to organize rendezvous. How do we get the professional timber framers more interested.

John Miller – interested in the set up of the finances of the Guild. Has specific goals in trying to work with Joel and Will to make the Quick book reports managerially effective. 'I have been involved with the Guild since I joined in 1989, been a part of 15 projects, and have run for the Guild Board a few times during those years.' I would also like to see more documentation of Guild history in a richer way that we have so far.

Sandy Bennett - Most important thing is to get the Guild back in the black. Let's make some decision, move forward and make the Guild successful.

Adrian Jones – I would like to increase the relevance of the Guild to the professional timber framers. The Guild needs to attract more practitioners.

I think the apprenticeship will help. I want to make sure the Guild is here for the next generation of timber framers. It's important to recognize the history while we're making it applicable to the next level.

There was discussion regarding the future of the Guild, where it's going, how it's going to get there, and who will take the Guild to the next level and what is the next level. Much discussion on the relevance of the Guild to the guys in the shop.

Approval of the Guild Board minutes.

John Miller made a motion to approve the minutes of December 3, 2008 and January 7, 2009, seconded by Adrian Jones. Unanimous approval. Brenda will send the approved minutes to the Will for the files and to Joel for posting on the website.

There was a discussion of the process of selecting of the Executive Committee and how officers are chosen. It was concluded that a plan for determining the officers for the next year will be decided before the end of this Board meeting. Whit read the 'Board Member Duties and Responsibilities'.

Following detailed discussion on the Board responsibilities, a motion was made by John Miller, seconded by Adrian Jones to accept the slate of officers that the Executive Committee recommended.

President – Rick Collins

Vice President – Chris Gunn

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Clerk – Whit Holder

Treasurer – Sandy Bennett

10:38 Unanimously approved.

At this point Brenda Baker handed the clerk duties over to Whit Holder.

Ken states that he expects to lower the costs of publishing the journal next year.

Chris asked Joel and Will what they would like to accomplish for the Guild and personally for this next year.

Joel—Make it the best year ever!

Will--see where we can be more efficient, no new programs except Apprenticeship, no curriculum development

Adjourn 11PM

Friday January 16, 2008

Rick calls meeting to order at 9:09

Rick's goal: take a broader look at succession planning, looking at things globally

Brenda would like to add agenda items:

election of board members

TFBC discussion

value and merit of a F2F

Status reports--Joel

tasks assigned were completed --ED evals, approving budget, and perfecting the agenda

Election discussion:

should members be allowed to vote for fewer than three candidates?

Why require 3 votes?

it requires folks to read bios

prevents popularity contest

forces members to vote to fill all vacancies

Vote to change policy to allow members to vote for no more than 3 candidates:

Passes 7-2 (minority—Chris and Whit)

Action items:

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Will--change the ballot to reflect this change

Brenda—write a letter to the individual who suggested this change

Adrian Jones agrees to chair the nominations committee

TFBC discussion tabled to later slot

Treasurer's report--Sandy

Sandy listed each change in the 2009 budget's income/expense from last year's actuals.

Sandy encourages the Board to keep an eye on expenses, but to look closer at the income side to make the budget work this year, because expenses are pretty well fixed.

6 income categories (in order of net revenue generation):

1. Projects
2. Advertising (cost of publication offset by advertising and dues)
3. Auction
4. Sales
5. Conferences/seminars
6. Dues

Action item:

Joel will have a report next week for results of December membership renewals

Sandy's goal for 2009: simplify and focus on problem areas on income side.

Action item:

Staff will present a written plan prior to February's Board call for achieving our 2009 income goals in these 6 categories.

Action item:

Ad hoc committee of Sandy, John, and Adrian will reorganize the chart of accounts to streamline and clarify reporting. They'll report back with a timeline after their first January meeting

Will is more optimistic of cutting expenses than increasing income.

10:30 Discussion of grants

Will has a lead on a grant for a barn book.

He requests help finding entities to solicit for grants.

Consensus that grants provide for an expansion in member services, but are not a source of income

Grant funding for the Guild has proven elusive.

Having the Apprenticeship Program may qualify us for grants we are not aware of.

10:51 Will would like to consider changes to the auction to possibly extend it beyond the event itself.

Break 10:55-11:07

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11:07 Apprenticeship/curriculum

Will lead a discussion of the current status of program development

Will's goal is to open the program by year's end.

Under the suggested funding model, the employer will withhold a portion of the apprentice's wages and remit this to the Guild to cover the costs of administering the program.

Discussion of wages, funding, and administration

12:09 Publications

Action item: Ken will meet with Sue and develop a revised publications budget for the Board.

Susan Witter has returned as editor of Scantlings and Patti Chambers has moved to layout and graphic design.

Scantlings is also available as an e-pub now.

Discussion of potential changes to Scantlings expenses:

1. going to a non-profit periodical postage category to save .10
2. folding one more time to save 50%
3. using a lighter paper to save additional cost (and to facilitate folding)

We will continue to produce the paper Scantlings throughout 2009.

Discussion of going exclusively to e-distribution beyond 2009

Action item: Will and Joel will set an end date for the e-Scantlings discount.

Benefits of going exclusively to Scantlings e-distribution include:

1. Searchable database
2. Timeliness
3. Saves trees
4. Potential Google searchability for advertisers

Combining Scantlings and Timber Framing:

Ken suggests we would lose advertising revenue unless we increased rates.

Very little discussion, although the concept appealed to many

Discussion of e-distribution of the membership directory to all members, with the opportunity to buy a hard copy on the web store (members only)

Ken suggests that it is possible to increase the distribution of Timber Framing to 5,000, thereby increasing ad revenue, but the tactics elude him.

Action item: Publications committee will present a proposal to the Board on tactics to increase profitability and increase member services.

12:59 Lunch

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2:01 Strategic Planning

Joel placed this item on the agenda and would like the Board to commit to strategic planning. Strategic planning identifies short and long-term goals and tactics for achieving them, and will allow the Board to measure the success of its endeavors.

Brenda describes strategic planning as consensus-building to unify our efforts, and anticipates this process taking one day.

The Visioning of 2004 identified areas of emphasis within the Guild:

1. Expand member outreach

Regional gatherings are a recurring theme, and the Board would like to continue to offer projects and workshops in all regions of the country, but will not spend effort on regional conferences or regional chapters.

2. Surveys

We conduct surveys of conference attendees, project partners, the membership, and former members to get feedback on performance and satisfaction and to generate useful data for strategic planning.

Action item: Joel, Whit, and Ken will develop a list of questions for member-wide surveys

3. Encourage communities of interest

We attempt to support TFEC, TTRAG, and carpenters with events/gatherings for them.

Action item: Joel to place a blurb in Scantlings to inform the membership of our previous success and future endeavors in supporting communities of interest

4. Raffle workshops—abandoned

5. Increase scholarships

The scholarship system seems to be working. Discussion about an update of what is going on with recipients now, and if we could determine the long-term accomplishments of scholarships

3:00 Projects

General discussion of the project model and how it furthers the purposes of the Guild

Projects consume a tremendous amount of Guild time and energy.

The Board will evaluate the success of projects by considering whether the educational goals are met, the budget goals are met, and by comparing the amount of Guild resources expended vs. the amount of training delivered.

In 2008 the Project Committee developed a detailed description of the role and responsibilities of Guild local heroes.

Discussion about projects and workshops and the differences and merits of each model

Whit would like to add another workshop this year and will circulate a proposal.

Joel spent 35% of his time in 2008 on projects, and plans to spend less time in 2009, because fewer projects are scheduled.

Board consensus is that Joel will not actively pursue any additional projects for 2009, but potential projects will continue to be reviewed by the Projects Committee.

4:04 Break

4:25 Membership

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Membership will be a major focus for the Guild's efforts in 2009.

Discussion of membership retention and attracting professional carpenters

Discussion of the slide show for attracting/challenging the guys in the shop

Discussion of auto-renewal and how to promote it

The Board would like to see growth in professional membership in 2009.

The staff set a goal for 2009 for 2000 members

The Board discusses soliciting the opinions of company managers regarding the value and relevance of Guild membership for their employees.

5:10 Adjourn

Saturday January 17, 2009

9:13 Conference Frequency

Discussion of conference schedule for 2009-2011

We will continue having two conferences in 2009: Sun River and Saratoga

We are scheduled for Coeur d'Alene and Montebello in 2010.

Whit Holder supports one national conference and one national rendezvous each year.

An informal vote shows Board support for continuing the two annual conferences model: 8-1 (minority: Whit)

Brenda's opinion from being on the conference committee: conferences are a service for non-professional members, and she believes it will be worth doing if the only income from it is the auction income

9:55 Policy Governance

Rick presents the Carter System of self-governance:

1. The Board delegates but has total accountability

Action item: The Board will delegate better

Action item: Brenda will rewrite a single job description for the ED position and they will divide responsibilities

2. Empower the staff

Action item: Don't micro-manage; give staff the authority to make decisions

3. Act in a highly disciplined manner

Action item: Respect each other by maintaining agenda and meeting protocol

4. Evaluation of performance should be a Board duty

Action item: Allocate brain-storming and problem-solving to task groups or informal gatherings

5. The Board's operates best as an undivided unit

Action item: Present a unified front

11:10 CCat

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The Board, staff, and former directors took the C-Cat test in 2008. The Board uses the results of the test as a perspective tool.

Joel recommends taking the test again in October, and believes he can get a higher participation rate among staff and former directors.

Rick suggests adding lead instructors to the list of invitees.

General discussion about the results of the 2008 test

Consensus--taking the test once a year would be beneficial to identifying trends within our organizational management and operation.

11:27 Measuring our educational effectiveness

We are currently using tools to measure our educational effectiveness, including project and conference surveys.

Review and discussion of the Mission Statement

Consensus—The Mission Statement is still a true and accurate representation of the Guild's goals and endeavors

11:40 Committee structure

Discussion about measuring committee success and merit

Review of individual committee purposes

Rick encourages the Board to remember that the committees exist so that we can use them

Discussion of whether individual committee purposes should be created by the committee or given by the Board

Board clarifies that the EDs are not expected to participate on every committee call, and should only participate on calls at their discretion.

Action item: Each Board member on a committee will give recommendations to the Board regarding the committee's purpose prior to March call.

The Board approves of an ad-hoc Forestry Policy committee, with Austin Parsons as chair.

12:33 Website

Joel reports that he and Will are in the process of taking most of the web responsibilities in-house.

2009 will be a maintenance year and not a growth year for the Guild website

Discussion about future web development

Joel created a Wiki for the Gindlerproject and it enjoyed popular success. He plans to do daily reports from John C. Campbell project in June.

12:47 Lunch

2:06 Board Meetings for 2009

Decision to meet Thursday before the Sun River conference from 5-7PM without dinner

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Agenda items:

Review Finance committee report

Review HR transition report

Determine a potential slate of officers for 2010 for mentoring purposes

2:14 Succession planning

The Board addressed the long-range plans of Ken, Joel, and Will.

Transition within these positions will be considered by HR as they re-write the ED job descriptions.

General discussion of succession planning

Action item: Brenda will create a succession time-line and transition flow chart.

The Board will consider transition planning throughout this year

Board Succession

Adrian, John, and Chris are beginning a new term.

Sandy, Al, and Whit are in their second year.

Rick, Grigg, and Brenda will encounter term limits after this year.

Discussion of potential slate of officers for 2010 tabled to Spring F2F at Sun River.

3:13 TFBC

Discussion of a Guild delegate to TFBC meetings and a TFBC delegate to Guild meetings

Brenda will inform the TFBC of the results of this discussion.

Brenda recommended Pam Hinton to the conference committee as TFBC representative and encouraged Guild members, especially TFG Board members to attend the TFBC educational conference in Greenville, SC, in late April.

Discussion of conference discounts. None offered at this time.

3:30 Break

3:48 TFBC (continued)

Discussion of the concept of the TFBC and the Guild operating in the same storefront in the future

3:56 Disaster planning

Discussion of the potential impact of the current economic climate on Guild operations in the short-term

Sandy suggested that we use our membership to offset staff energy whenever possible, and suggested the formation of an Auction committee to plan the sale and solicit donations.

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Action Item: Joel will ask Paul Kessler for his list of timber frame companies
Action Item: Joel will task the Membership committee to systematically cold-call these companies.

4:23 Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted,
Whit Holder
Clerk