

Wallcovering Installers Association

March 3-4, 2017 | Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Mike DiGilio, Vice President, at 2:05 PM CT on Friday, March 3, 2017.

Roll call was taken by Bob Banker, Secretary.

Present:

Michael DiGilio, Vice President

Bob Banker, Secretary

Heidi Wright Mead, C.P., Treasurer

Cyndi Green, C.P., Immediate Past President

Pam McCartney, South Regional Director

Dennis George, West Regional Director

Jack Egan, Northeast Regional Director

Susan Macuna, C.P., Central Regional Director

Michelle Corl, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director

Greg Laux, National Associate Member Committee Chair

Brian Bowman, Association Executive

Kay Lowe, Events Manager

Absent:

Vincent LaRusso, C.P., President (excused)

Guests:

Michael King, South Regional Alternate Director (Friday, March 3, 2017)

Dave Adams, Northeast Regional Alternate Director (Saturday, March 4, 2017)

Dave Cook, Website Committee Chair (Saturday, March 4, 2017 via phone)

Vincent LaRusso, C.P., President (Saturday, March 4, 2017 via phone)

ACTION ITEM: Staff to send Board meeting pre-read materials no less than seven (7) days in advance of the meeting.

Vice President's Report

The Vice President's report was submitted. Mr. DiGilio expanded on the information in the report regarding the Wallcoverings Association (WA) meeting in Clearwater Beach, Florida with Mr. LaRusso at the end of January, 2017. Mr. DiGilio noted that it was a good benefit for WIA to attend the WA meeting and get the WIA name out. Both he and Mr. LaRusso were warmly received at the meeting, but attending the meeting is

pricy. Going forward, it might be a better idea to either send one person or to go every other year.

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the Board of Directors teleconference from January 17, 2017 were reviewed. Corrections noted:

- Joel Ellis was the person who expressed interest in being involved in the 2018 WIA Convention, not Michael King.
- Doug Wentzel is the Alternate Regional Director for the Central Region and should be added to the Board roster.
- Correct the date of the Central Region Workshop to May 6, 2017

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the Board of Directors teleconference from January 17, 2017 with the changes noted above. The motion was seconded and approved.

Treasurer's Report

Revenues

On the review of the 2017 WIA budget, Ms. Wright-Mead noted that the 2016 WIA Convention was ok but that it was not a banner year. With the current projections, the organization will run a \$12,000 to \$13,000 deficit in 2017. Most of the reason for the deficit in 2017 is the cost of the blog with Active Blogs. However, the traffic being driven to the WIA website by the blog is worth the cost in the long term.

Ms. Wright-Mead told the group that the association would operate with a deficit for the next couple of years with these types of expenses because the overall goal is to acquire and retain new members and the revenue growth of the organization would resolve the budget issues.

Questions were asked about what operating with a deficit does to the association. Ms. Wright-Mead noted that there is \$50,000 in a savings account and an additional \$40,000 in CD's for such situations. There was additional discussion on this point and board members noted areas in the budget where the association can make up some revenues and reduce the budget shortfall. Ms. Wright-Mead noted that region budgets have been lowered to \$250, as regions rarely use their money. She added that regions can spend more if they need more.

Convention

Another area of questioning by the board was in regard to sponsorships of various events. In 2016, no event or activity was sponsored during the WIA Convention. The board believes that sponsorships of convention events and other WIA activities are a

needed area of emphasis and a long discussion among the board members on this topic ensued. Mr. DiGilio noted that in 2016 the plan was to approach associate members to sponsor an entire event. Mr. DiGilio asked if the association should look for new ways to approach associates, or continue with last year's plan. Can we do something different that will generate sponsorship of some of the events?

In the ensuing discussion, it was noted that WIA should stop hitting up current members and seek out new avenues for sponsorships. It was also noted that WIA has over complicated sponsorship opportunities; that most of the companies approached by WIA have no idea who the association is and that the greatest sales feature we have at this time is the website search engine. Other board members cautioned that care has to be taken in how the association makes an approach for a sponsorship and that it cannot be "too in their face".

The end result of the discussion among the board members was that the board wants to pursue "new blood" and manufacturers who are not current WIA Associate members for sponsorships of this nature going forward.

In order to do this, a new collateral piece will be developed. The board is directing staff to pursue these sponsorships among the targeted group of manufacturers. Mr. Laux and Ms. Corl from the board and Mr. Bowman from the staff were tasked by the board to develop a new collateral piece and to pursue sponsorships for both the 2017 and 2018 WIA Conventions. Ms. Macuna suggested that packages be developed for various levels of sponsorships. Mr. DiGilio believes that companies are willing to help, but they need to be contacted.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Laux, Ms. Corl and staff will develop a new collateral piece that can be used to pursue sponsorships for both the 2017 and 2018 WIA Conventions.

Merchandise

As the discussion of the budget continued, the topic moved into merchandise and what is available and how it can be developed. At the present time, merchandise is available but it is low-key and "quiet". Ms. McCartney told the board that the updated WIA logo should be sent to the merchandise vendor. Ms. Wright-Mead noted that this area should be turned over to staff for further work. Additionally, she thought that merchandise could be advertised in *The Installer*. This led into a side discussion about advertising for both a printed and online directory of WIA installer members and associate members. After a short discussion, it was determined that this matter should be given to the staff to pursue.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to send updated WIA logo to merchandise vendor and work on updating WIA merchandise and availability.

Expenses

The 2017 budget discussion moved to expenses. Ms. Wright-Mead opened the discussion with the topic of the management fee, which has not increased in over five years and added that there was no increase in fees budgeted for 2017. During the ensuing discussion, it was noted that staff responsibilities have changed/increased. It was suggested that there may need to be an updated "scope of work" created. The management contract has been shared with the executive committee via Google Drive and would be a good resource to review. Mr. Banker told the board that Ms. Wright-Mead in her role as Treasurer should lead a review team consisting of herself and two additional board members and that management and staff need to create an updated scope of work that includes a defined and specific list of what is and is not included in their definition of job duties.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Wright Mead and two other board members to act as a review team and management/staff are to create a "scope of work" that reflects the tasks they are requested to perform.

There was a significant amount of discussion about the request for the WIA President to attend the UK workshop (~\$1500) under the budget area for the board of director's expenses. No consensus was reached on whether the association should bear this expense. A suggested compromise was proposed to cover a lesser amount towards the cost. After a lengthy discussion, a motion was made to pay the registration fee for the event of \$395.00.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to include the registration fee of \$395.00 for the UK Workshop (May 2017) for the WIA President in the 2017 budget.

Ms. Macuna was tasked by the board to reach out to UK members of WIA to set up a reception in the UK for local and U.S.-based members. Member services funds could be used for a social activity in UK. Additionally, region expenses could be increased to provide the Central Region with funds to help cover the expenses for this event.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Macuna to set up a social activity with U.S. and UK members during the WIA UK Workshop in May, 2017.

Education

Many members want education and accreditation as part of the actual convention and not just as pre-convention events. The board members talked at length about accreditation and what form education should take at the convention.

Concerns were raised about the attendance at the convention in 2017. Due to cost and time, some members registered for the UK tour will likely not register for the convention. With this and the fact that there will be an increase in the registration fee for the convention, it is expected that there could be a drop in the number of attendees; however the proposed budget is built on having more attendees. In order to

mitigate the potential short-falls there will have to be a super effort in marketing and advertising and a large number of promotional ads on multiple platforms will be needed.

It was noted that the costs for food and beverages minimum required amounts are increased in 2017 and 2018. The board noted that the price will have to increase for the convention and that will amplify the need to draw in new attendees and non-members from the region. With a focus on beginner level education on Thursday and advanced techniques on Friday, opportunity exists. Ideas to bring in more non-members included giving more than education on fabric, possibly hand-trimmed papers and other specialized courses. Having one specialty training class may encourage people to come to the convention and/or join because they can't get this level of training anywhere else.

There was more discussion regarding the regional directors and the need to push the convention hard. Leaders and staff will need to encourage people to post on social media about hotel and its amenities and even reference the various types of great wallpaper that has been hung throughout the hotel.

Communications

Ms. Wright-Mead made a recommendation that the production schedule for *The Installer* be changed to having three (3) printed copies and three (3) digital issues with the cost savings being dedicated to marketing. Each printed copy costs approximately \$3,000 dollars to print and mail while each digital copy costs about \$900 to create. A suggestion was made that *The Installer* be made completely digital and that the current edition be added to the website. The main emphasis for this was that it would make a significant reduction in the budget shortfall for 2017 if the print costs were eliminated. The board rejected the suggestion without a vote. Many on the board believe there is an overwhelming desire of members to have a printed copy sent to them. A request was made for the staff to obtain bids for publications printing and see if there are lower cost options available. A suggestion was made that if members want to receive printed copies of both the annual directory and *The Installer*, then they would be charged an additional subscription fee with their membership renewal or application. A statement to members would need to be included on membership forms if this tactic is enacted.

Ms. Wright-Mead will send revisions to the proposal to the board. She will also work on the wording to present to the board and will increase the budget for printed issues. Regarding marketing and the website, it was agreed that a goal would be to start working toward embedding videos on the website and updating the top banner twice a year because investing in these goals is worthwhile.

No other items in the 2017 WIA Budget proposal were discussed.

A motion was made, seconded and passed to adopt the proposed 2017 WIA Budget with revisions made during the March 3-4, 2017 Board of Directors meeting.

Member Services Report

Nothing added to the written report.

Communications Committee Report

Nothing added to the written report.

Standing Rules/Bylaws Committee Report

Mr. DiGilio noted that he had not contacted Ted Ruess after the January teleconference and would do so after the Board meeting.

WIAF Fund Report

Nothing added to the written report.

Nomination Committee Report

At the present time, there are two members on the Nomination Committee. These are Phil Ostler and Cyndi Green. Three people are needed and volunteers were requested. The suggestion was made to seek out previous board members. Names mentioned included: Jennifer Curtis, Sarah Smyth, Kyle Burgman, Heidi Johnson, Stephen Kaye and Mike McGinley.

2017 Convention Committee Report

The committee will be setting prices for the various convention events and determining a convention schedule shortly. This will probably take place before the next Board Huddle in April. Additionally, the committee is developing plans for a Poker Run/Saloon event to take place on Thursday night. There was an additional discussion about educational classes and how to video the classes and some of the obstacles involved in doing this.

Craftsmanship Awards Committee Report

It was emphasized that regional directors will need to contact their members to push for entries into the 2017 contest.

National Awards Committee Report

The same push from regional directors for the Craftsmanship Awards will be needed for National Awards as well.

A motion to suspend the meeting for the evening was made at 5:30 PM CT. The motion was seconded and passed.

The board meeting reconvened at 8:30 AM CT on Saturday, March 4, 2017.

Education Committee Report

Education offerings at the 2017 WIA Convention were a major point of discussion. As of now, the idea is to set a base price of \$199.00 for each class. Currently, the plans are to have one class as a "basic" class and will use the Guy Cooper textbook as a guide for teaching and organizing the course. The other classes are going to be for more experienced installers and will be divided into segments that can be taken individually or in total. The pricing for registration will be set up in such a manner that each course individually will be at one price and if an individual registers for all three segments, then there will be a discount given.

Mr. DiGilio noted that for future conventions, he would like to see a list of five (5) topics for education developed and the committee can select two (2) from that list to set up classes at the convention. Mr. DiGilio continued that he would like to have the Education Committee be more aggressive in determining what classes should be taught and/or developed.

During the discussion of the Education Committee report, Mr. Egan asked the board if they all received the Survey Monkey that was sent out in regard to education. Over half of the board members said they did not receive either the Survey Monkey or March Madness emails. Staff explained the process for sending emails to the entire WIA membership and noted that there are instances where members do not receive the emails. Some of the reasons noted by staff included the email being classified as junk or 'spam', issues with email service providers, filters and protocols for certain types of emails, etc. This was also noted as being an issue that is not exclusive to WIA but to any organization or group that sends emails to large numbers of people at one time.

ACTION ITEM: Determine why Board members are not receiving blast emails sent from WIA office.

Website Committee Report

Most of the metrics regarding the WIA website are in regard to consumers. What is needed by WIA is information on how many people are going to the "Join WIA" area or areas of the website that directly pertain to becoming a WIA member. How many new members are being created by visits to the website? Suggestions were made to update the "Join WIA" section in such a manner as to get contact information with getting an email address being considered as a minimum step. Mr. Laux mentioned that the Emma email system might be able to address and resolve some of this issue.

Marketing Committee Report

Mr. Laux is requesting that staff provide answers to all of the questions presented in the submitted report. Additionally, Mr. Laux wants to have the pages on the WIA website updated on a regular basis. The question in regard to this is who would do the updating and in what manner? Mr. Laux is firm in his thoughts that marketing must be done and if maintaining the message requires the spending of funds, then it should be done. There were questions on recruiting new members and how the information on individuals who inquire about joining WIA is kept. Mr. Laux noted during this discussion that the Emma email system would have the capability to send multiple emails to potential new members in an automatic sequence/schedule.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to provide answers to committee questions in the report. Also develop a plan to update the various sections of the WIA website on a regular basis.

Regional Reports

Before the discussion of the reports began, Ms. Wright-Mead noted that it might be a good idea to develop a template for the regional reports that each Regional Director can use going forward. Ms. Wright-Mead added that she will develop the template.

Additionally, a discussion started in regard to "at-large" and "chapter" members. During this discussion, it was noted that there are members who are less than 10 miles from a chapter but still choose to be at-large members. Several board members expressed the idea that members should be assigned to a chapter and that the at-large designation should be removed. The board did not agree with this idea and did not pursue it.

South Region Report

Nothing added to the submitted report.

Mid-Atlantic Region Report

Ms. Corl noted that she is currently working on trying to set up a tour of York Wallcoverings' production facility. She detailed some of the issues that she is encountering in this effort and noted that some of this is due to changes in management and policies. She believes that she will be able to have something resolved by the next board meeting.

Central Region Report

Nothing added to the submitted report.

Northeast Region Report

Nothing added to the submitted report.

West Region Report

Nothing added to the submitted report.

New Business

There was a discussion of creating logos to be used on the website and with members on their individual pages. Some of the specific logos that the board would like to be created include ones for the convention, Craftsmanship Awards, CP and other accreditations.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to develop initial logos for some of the items noted. Modifying and using the current scissors logo from NGPP is fine.

For the 2018 Convention in Denver, Mr. Laux explained some of the discussions that the Chicago chapter held recently. Out of those discussions came the idea to “re-boot” the convention format beginning in 2018. The overview of the event is that it would be a three-day event and it would have a heavy emphasis on audio-visual elements, including web streaming.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to work with the audio-visual team at the 2018 Convention venue to determine feasibility and requirements needed for the proposed re-vamp of the convention from a technology/audio-visual standpoint.

A motion was made to make the 2018 WIA Convention in Denver a three-day event and to have the Chicago Chapter help coordinate and develop the event. The motion was seconded and approved.

There was a discussion of the metrics pages and SEO report that were included in the board pre-read. A comment was made that the Education tab/WIA University tab should be removed from the website.

ACTION ITEM: Remove the Education tab/WIA University tab from the WIA website.

The meeting was suspended for lunch.

The meeting resumed with the topics listed on the “Idea Building Session” sheet distributed by Mr. DiGilio.

One of the first items discussed was the membership list requested by Mr. Banker. It was noted that the list was not separated out by individual regions. Additionally, there was no age or demographic information listed. Staff noted that much of the information requested is either not asked or kept on file. The regional directors were tasked to contact the members in their regions. In addition to ensuring that the information on file is accurate, the regional directors were asked to get the following information on each member: their age or age range, the calendar year in which they plan to retire, if they have apprentices or employees and if so, how many.

ACTION ITEM: Staff to update the spreadsheet that has this membership information with the information requested above.

A discussion ensued regarding the information in the spreadsheet on members and membership. Ms. Wright-Mead detailed the membership trends for the last several years which show a disturbing trend with membership declining steadily over the last several years. New member gains do not make up for the attrition of those lost due to retirement or leaving the field.

An idea was expressed to develop a written solicitation piece with the goal of getting details on paperhangers from companies. Discussion further developed proposing to get an ASID membership list to market WIA membership to, if possible. Membership should also be marketed on our social media sites on a regular basis. Going forward, the Marketing Committee will coordinate with staff and let staff know what they want to post and how often to post items, etc.

Discussion ensued relating to the use of social media, both Facebook and Instagram. Mr. Adams demonstrated how he has used both platforms with both his business and for WIA. Mr. Adams demonstrated a video slide-show of approximately 45 seconds in length on Instagram that was created with simple edits of still photos. There was conversation and discussion among all of the members about how best to use the platforms and some of the technical issues involved in their use.

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 PM CT. The motion passed.

Submitted by,

Bob Banker
Secretary