

# Wallcovering Installers Association

Board of Directors

September 14, 2016 | Board Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Vincent LaRusso, C.P., President, at 1:00 PM ET on Wednesday, September 14, 2016.

President LaRusso welcomed everyone to the meeting and took a minute to introduce the new association executive, Brian Bowman. There were some welcoming remarks made afterwards by the assembled group.

Roll call was taken by Bob Banker, Secretary.

## Present:

Vincent LaRusso, C.P., President  
Michael DiGilio, Vice President  
Bob Banker, Secretary  
Heidi Wright Mead, C.P., Treasurer  
Cyndi Green, C.P., Immediate Past President  
Gerri Beauvais, West Region Director  
Jack Egan, Northeast Region Director  
Michelle Corl, Mid-Atlantic Region Director  
Lynnie Winter, C.P., Central Region Director  
Susan Macuna, C.P., Central Region Alternate Director  
Shelly Wilkins, C.P., Mid-Atlantic Region Alternate Director  
Jerry Russo, National Associate Member Committee Co-Chair  
Greg Laux, National Associate Member Committee Co-Chair  
Kim Fantaci, Executive Vice President  
Brian Bowman, Association Executive

## Guests:

Anthony Russo, C.P., National Awards and Nominating Committee Chair  
Elsie Kaptenia, Marketing Committee Member  
Stephen Kaye, Member  
Dave Adams, Incoming Northeast Region Alternate Director

## Absent:

Pam McCartney, South Region Director  
Michael King, South Region Alternate Director  
Joel Ellis, West Region Alternate Director  
Heidi Johnson, Northeast Region Alternate Director

Before discussion of the first item on the agenda for the meeting, Mr. J. Russo was appointed Sergeant-At-Arms for the meeting. Per Mr. LaRusso, his role is to keep the meeting moving, to keep track of who has spoken and recognize who the next speaker will be. Cross-talking among Board members is discouraged because it slows down the meeting and causes the meeting to go off-track.

Per Mr. LaRusso, we do follow Robert's Rules and it was noted that everyone needs to have an opportunity to speak before someone speaks for a second time.

It was requested that all phones be put away. Additionally, there are to be no recordings of any sort to be made of the meeting.

### **President's Report**

The President's report was submitted.

### **Secretary's Report**

The draft Board of Directors meeting and huddle minutes were reviewed for June 14, 2016, July 12, 2016 and August 9, 2016.

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2016, July 12, 2016 and August 9, 2016 meetings. The motion passed.*

### **Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Wright Mead presented her report and stated that her only addition to the report is that we will likely have a net loss for the year. We have allocated some additional expenses and the University is launching a little later than anticipated so the projected revenue will not be realized.

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the July 31, 2016 financial statement as presented. The motion passed.*

### **Member Services Committee Report**

Mr. DiGilio took a minute to emphasize working with Google Docs. Everything for committees has been set up on Google Docs and each committee has its own folder. Different invites went out to different people with each invite dependant on the committee they are a part of. Everyone can work and connect through those documents. Only committee chairs have cross authority; committee members will have access to their folder only. The goal is to have everything on-line and those with a need to know will be able to access documents.

Mr. Laux asked a question about the proficiency of individuals to use Google Docs. He added a second question about the level of training on Google Docs that Board and committee members have.

Mr. DiGilio stated that his plan was to work with the Board first on Google Docs. This would mostly be competency refreshers. After that, he would work with committee members who needed training on the program.

We can use Google tutorial videos to help train and refresh everyone on using Google Docs. We can also place links for the videos in the University platform.

### **Communications Committee Report**

Mr. LaRusso shared a major point from Ms. Proctor's report. This is her request to reduce the number of newsletters from the current number of six down to four issues per year.

A number of Board members spoke to this suggestion. While the current number of six is a benefit to members and an ability to show what the organization is doing, others replied that it has been tough to get content for the newsletter on a regular basis and, in many cases, it is the same members who are doing the writing. A suggested alternative was to get the committee chair some help to keep the articles flowing and to supplement communication through other means not just newsletter. There is more than one answer to the problem. The newsletter is an important piece of the puzzle but maybe through other mediums we can continue the communication with members— try the quarterly and see how things work.

It was determined that the committee chair has the authority to edit and streamline articles. There was also a discussion among Board members on articles and guidelines to print articles in the newsletter. After this discussion, it was determined that the committee chair has the right to edit or accept articles.

### **Bylaws Committee Report**

Per Ms. Winter, prior to the updates to the bylaws in 2012, 2014 & 2016, the last update had been in 2002. After some discussion, a deadline of September 21 was set for Board members to review and comment on the proposed changes before the document with an executive summary goes to the members for a vote.

### **WIAF Fund Committee Report**

Mr. Russo stated that the goal was to approach all associates and members to contribute to the fund. In order to do so, the Board would need to approve.

*A motion was made and seconded to solicit contributions to the WIAF from members of the WIA. The motion passed.*

The Fund is intended to help members with needs on a catastrophic basis. The fact that payments to the fund are voluntary was confirmed.

### **Nomination/Election Committee Report**

Per Mr. Russo, Anthony Russo has chosen to step down from the chairmanship of this committee in order to focus more on the Awards Committee. After the conclusion of the Board meeting, Mr. Russo will be taking volunteers to fill the chair vacancy.

After discussion among the Board, it was agreed that a table would be set up during the convention to recruit volunteers for committees. Current leaders would be available to talk about their committees to see if there was interest and to answer any questions. Individual committees would have sign-in sheets and committee descriptions, with the current committee chair on the individual sheet.

### **Convention Committee Report**

#### Convention Location Task Force

Mr. J. Russo provided the Task Force report. There was discussion about the make-up of the Convention Location Task Force. The members of the task force were identified as: Ms. Wright-Mead, Ms. Green, Ms. McCartney, Mr. J. Russo and Ms. Fantaci.

There was additional discussion about the operation of the task force. Ms. Corl stated her belief that the Task Force was supposed to make recommendations to the Board, not to make the decision itself. It was noted that this is a recommendation, a decision has not been made or approved. She also said for the future, it would be nice to have two locations from the task force and then the Board could make a final decision. It was noted that the task force was asked to make a recommendation between two cities. Mr. Laux said that the Board should trust the task force and their recommendation and Ms. Winter stated that micromanagement would reduce the effectiveness of the task force.

The task force made a recommendation for September 6-9, 2017 at The Worthington Hotel in Fort Worth, Texas. The location is just across from Sundance Square. Fort Worth has good access for flights with two airports that attendees can fly into.

*A motion to approve of the 2017 convention being September 6-9, 2017 at the Worthington Hotel in Fort Worth Hotel was made and seconded. The motion passed.*

For 2018, the task force made a recommendation for September 12-15, 2018 in Denver, Colorado at the Holiday Inn Cherry Creek. The hotel is a 5-minute drive from downtown and located in an upscale suburb of Denver.

There was discussion about Denver and a pre-convention excursion to Colorado Springs for sight-seeing and recreational events. Mr. Laux talked for several minutes about the balance of convention enjoyment and profitability and how these work in the selection of a convention location. Ms. Corl also spoke with additional comments regarding the lack of choices and the task force coming to the Board with just one choice.

There was also some discussion about possible 2019 convention locations. At the present time, Indianapolis, Indiana, Williamsburg, Virginia (with a day trip to DC) and Charleston, South Carolina are being explored by the task force.

There was a discussion on how and why the cities are chosen and the criteria and methodology involved in the process. The goal of the task force is to set the date and location for convention sites three (3) years out.

*A motion was made and seconded finalize and contract for September 12-15, 2018 in Denver at the Holiday Inn Cherry Creek. The motion passed.*

There was discussion about the convention committee chair position and the process of selecting a chair as well as stepping up the planning process for the conventions.

The task force is going to solicit self-nominations from members for the position of convention chair for 2017 and 2018. Part of the selection process for the convention chair is that there would be an interview conducted by the task force. The interview would largely consist with questions about what they hope to accomplish at a convention in regard to education, vendors, theme, etc.

Several Board members noted the membership is not beating down the door to volunteer. That started a discussion about what type of incentive could be put together and offered to help solicit a volunteer – maybe sweeten the pot. Ideas for the Task Force to look at were mentioned.

Per the Board, recommendations are to be made for convention chair by end of September. This is so that candidates can be vetted and interviews conducted before providing Mr. LaRusso with a recommendation before a vote takes place at the next Huddle on October 11.

The idea of consistency of Convention Chairs is important. One idea for ensuring this is to appoint the 2018 Convention Chair now so that whoever is appointed can shadow the 2017 Convention Chair and observe the process, the timeline, etc., and be as effective as possible.

## **Craftsmanship Awards Committee Report**

There was a brief question about the number of votes in a region. The 2017 Craftsmanship Awards program will be opened shortly after the Convention to solicit entries for as long as possible and garner maximum promotional efforts.

## **Education Committee Report**

Per Mr. Egan, there was nothing more to add to his report.

## **Website Committee Report**

In response to a question about special requests for the website, Mr. Laux asked who gets the costs for the website, especially for items related to education and marketing. In response, it was stated that for the budget, all committees must go through the right channels.

## **Awards Committee Report**

Mr. A. Russo presented the committee's report and gave the current state of the committee. There are many deserving individuals who are not presented with an award. At the same time, there are a number of awards where there are not enough nominees to merit the presenting of an award. If no one qualifies then the award isn't presented. The newsletter award was mentioned as a prime example of this.

There was discussion on getting the Region Directors more involved and active in the nomination process with an overall goal of getting more nominations for each award. Likewise, engage Chapter Presidents and members at-large to help identify potential candidates.

Also discussed was the idea of renaming the awards to make them more relevant to the membership and general public. For example, the Installer of the Year instead of the Bob Isenberger Member of the Year award. Many newer members have little idea who the individuals are that these awards are named after, such as the Sam Kovnat Award. The awards could honor those individuals they are named after in the context and description of the award instead of in the name.

There was discussion about the nomination form being long and complicated as well as opening nominations up all year. Beyond that, there were also comments from the Board asking what awards does the association really want to have and how many awards does the association need.

Mr. A. Russo will go ahead and put together a proposal to revamp the awards.

## **Public Relations Committee Report**

No report was given due to the need to appoint a new committee chair or merge committees.

## **South Region Director Report**

Nothing more to add to the submitted report.

## **Mid-Atlantic Region Director Report**

Nothing more to add to the submitted report.

## **Central Region Director Report**

Nothing more to add to the submitted report.

## **Northeast Region Director Report**

Nothing more to add to the submitted report.

## **West Region Director Report**

Ms. Beauvais gave a brief rundown on future events in the region and this was the only addition to the submitted report.

## **New Business**

In May 2017 in London is a workshop (John Green is involved) – they are going to ask several key folks to speak. The coordinators are anticipating more non-members than members. The dates are May 23-26, 2017 with more details to come. This will be the first time that WIA has hosted an international workshop.

## **Marketing Report**

Mr. Laux gave a detailed presentation of an updated marketing plan for WIA. Part of his reasoning for the updated marketing plan is that many WIA members do not communicate as well as they could with potential customers due to generational differences.

The proposal made by Mr. Laux is the first step of many over the next 24 months and is what Mr. Laux called the “first answer to a bigger problem”.

Mr. Egan noted that Visual Apps has been crying for content for the WIA website for a couple of years and asked what this new proposal would do to provide this information. Mr. Laux explained how the blog development could aid with this need but would not fulfill the need completely.

There was a long discussion about the marketing proposal with a number of questions and answers.

When we look at Google Analytics – what are people looking for? We will develop the metrics with AMC and VA. Active Blogs will also have metrics.

Active Blogs, if engaged, will develop the blogs based on interviews and research.. They will repurpose the information via social media, our website and organic sharing.

*A motion was made and seconded to accept the Active Blogs marketing proposal at \$1250 per month (detailed in the proposal). The effective date is October 15, 2016 for an 18-month term. The motion passed after a roll call vote with six in favor, one against and one abstention.*

A conference call will be scheduled by the Marketing Committee between Active Blogs and VA to determine if there are any hidden/unknown costs.

## **Old Business**

### Tech Trac

Ms. Green gave a report on Tech Trac. This was the 4<sup>th</sup> year and it went great. It was sold out with a wait list for participants.

Tech Trac was put together in cooperation with the Wallcoverings Association (WA) to help with customer service and field reps getting them to job sites. It's a collaboration effort. It was tense between us and the union in the beginning and a lot of that tension has diminished. Part of the reason for the success is that manufacturers get to see what it is like to be an installer and they get to see things that they do not get to see that often.

There were five presentations this year to get everyone involved.

Three people from the union are coming here to Charlotte.

Education is the key and we brought this to the WA and it's turned out to be one of their most popular events.

## New Jersey Union Discussion

Ms. Corl provided information to the Board about a talk with the union in New Jersey and training opportunities at their training centers in north and south New Jersey.

The New Jersey union invited Ms. Corl to view the facilities. The union was very hospitable and they are willing to try to work with us – some proposals:

- 1) Wallcovering upgrade classes six times per year; our members could attend one class per year
- 2) A workshop where one of our folks is the instructor and allows their members to attend without charge

Concerns were making it fair to both union and WIA members and no risk. There were also questions about insurance liability and instructors. Ms. Corl noted that they do have a pathway for non-union installers to become union members.

Ms. Corl will continue to investigate and bring additional information to the Board.

Being no further business . . .

*A motion was made and seconded at 5:08 PM ET to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting. The motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Banker  
WIA National Secretary