

VIVA Meeting Minutes 11-9-23

In attendance were Chris Beck, Marla Smith, Gale Lurie, Michael Darr, Barbara Newton, Zuzana Korbelařova, Chuck Bonsteel, Tara Brenno, Corinne Lightweaver and Lynn McClain. Joining by zoom were Lin Holley, Marc Pease, Kedar Mankad, and support team Lindsay Hart and Sy Novak.

Marla proposed a motion to write a letter to PSCC to remove past officials Brian Fisher and Morgan Brig from the account. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chris Beck presented the Studio Tour Financial Report for October which states that although over \$11,000 was raised in Studio and Gallery fees for the winter tour, our expenses put us over \$1000 in the red. The large double Beachcomber ad seemed to tip the balance. However, a donation from a board member's charity-matching plan put us back on track.

Barbara Benedetti Newton gave the treasurer's report with a very thorough breakdown of what monies have been brought in and what monies have gone out so far this year. Barbara is taking over the financial reports and will become the treasurer for VIVA as of tomorrow

Sy's Tour Coordinator report was that the bulk mailing has been counted and thoroughly prepared for mailing on the 14th. Sy has asked that board members alert her when their brochure comes in the mail so that she can keep track of which areas have been covered. Sy spent a considerable amount of time on the phone with the main post office in Seattle where she learned that our bulk mailing could be reduced from \$1142 to \$652 by claiming a particular route and filling out forms, which she has done, saving VIVA \$490.

Marla reported that she mailed over 800 cards to various galleries in the surrounding towns and cities. Groups of 25 cards went out in envelopes to various galleries who said they would participate in handing them to customers.

The question of whether VIVA should have its own post office box came up, followed by a brief discussion as to whether there is a way to streamline the VIVA Membership application and payment process in January. This is tabled for the December agenda.

Sy reported that out of the 40 stops, she has received positive responses from many and that this year's new participants seem very excited about the tour.

Lindsay reported that the interactive map is live on our website and she has received several requests for changes and has had several questions. The social media campaign will begin November 10.

Zuz and Chuck took care of off island dissemination of brochures and cards. They report that they originally believed they had about 30 volunteers to do this work, and ended up with about half that number. Tara took care, and is taking care of on-island materials. All posters and brochures are out to member volunteers for off and on island. Plans for vetting volunteers -to be sure of commitment -in the future were discussed.

There was a question about the cost of brochures (about 25 cents each) and if we are wasting money printing so many of them. The unofficial decision is to print fewer brochures, and make sure that they are used on island in all the shops and stores - but sending cards off island with maps and information, and perhaps photos of participating artists work. We need to have a serious meeting, perhaps with a

smaller working group, after this tour, if we are going to make substantial changes in how we determine our advertising, ie, brochures going off island.

Marla will be the hub/point person for brochures and cards that we have left over from our original dissemination. She will be the person to contact if a volunteer needs to replenish any of the on island shops with cards or brochures.

A sidebar discussion concerning what a problem email chains are and how easy it is to lose track of information being sent out came up. The need for a very specific task list and evidence of who is in charge of what task is needed. An agreement to look into how we might streamline the process of disseminating information was raised, and will be discussed at future meetings.

Gale Lurie offered to head up a plan with an invitation to invite studios to be open the Friday between the two Tour weekends so that artists may see each other's work. Further information is forthcoming.

Marla issued a thank you to Karen Fevold, Ilse Reimnitz, and Lynn McClain, for working with her to sort, count and stuff all the bags for each of the 40 studios and make sure that cards were ready to be sent out to various surrounding galleries.

The next order of business was Sy's wish to discontinue her work as Tour Coordinator. She will continue to be our designer and VIVA Coordinator, a yearly position. A contract was offered to a local Vashon resident to take up where Sy has left off. After a few days, the mutual decision was that the contract would become null and void. The search continues for someone who will be able to step into Sy's fabulous shoes, train and take on those responsibilities.

It was noted that the Swiftwater Gallery liaison for VIVA is Donna Caulton. She will continue to submit information about classes and goings-on in the Gallery for our newsletter.

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Marla raised three proposals:

1. The \$20 membership fee should be raised to \$25 yearly, due at the end of January.

Voted and unanimously passed.

2. Studio fees will be raised from \$235-\$250 for the Spring Tour 2024.. Galleriey fees and individual artists' fees will stay the same.

Voted on and passed.

3. And as we get ready to train a tour coordinator for their new position, the new employee will be paid \$700 for their time and energy during training, which is half of the salary for the position.

Voted on and passed.

The question was raised as to why we are asking for a raise in both tour fees and membership fees, and the information that we are paying \$900 a month in operating expenses and need to cover costs. We are the least expensive studio tour, by far, in the region. We have run an all volunteer and very tight budget operation with minimal help by members.

Questions were raised about expectations of the next VIVA membership show. The question was raised as to how we can increase our professional responses to participants and expectations of fees and participation. The past member show, last month, was the first time, (6th or 7th show?), at which we asked for a \$10 fee for show participation. 80 of 85 members paid. There was an announcement of the fee ahead of application time, with the information that VIVA would pay for members who may not feel able to pay the fee. We want this show to continue to be an all-member opportunity. The monies will be used for operational expenses.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Lynn McClain.