

MINUTES

NWWS Board of Directors Meeting
Weds. April 9, 2025
Zoom Video Conference

12:15 - 1:00 Pre-meeting social time/lunch online
1 p.m. Call to Order

Attending: Deb Roskopf, Donna Botten, Mike Thoreson, Shirley Jordan, Molly Murrah, Peggy Meyers, Eileen McMackin, Linda Hulce, Karen Robinette, Elizabeth Houser, Sarah Love, D'Arcy Heiber, Shilpa Bhadsavle, Kristi Dyson, Roger Baker

Introductions: Board members introduced themselves and explained their NWWS roles with Donna Botten, our 2025 Open Exhibit Chair, and Elizabeth Houser, a member of the Social Media team who is joining us today to share what's happening in her area.

Approval of March 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the March meeting minutes was made by Peggy Meyers, seconded by Eileen McMackin and approved by all.

President's Report - Debbie Roskopf

May Elections - The ballots will be prepared with the existing slate of officers and an issue for members to approve, regarding waiving annual membership dues for active volunteers and board members.

Letters to those not accepted to WW - Deb advised that she'd sent email messages to all who entered Waterworks but whose paintings were not included in the exhibit.

Linktree - Deb showed how the Linktree was featured in a recent email blast and invited Elizabeth Houser to explain how this works. Discussion followed.

Forecasting - Compared to this time last year, membership revenue is down \$3,000, Spring workshops are down \$2,500 (though registration is still open for these events), and revenue is up about \$2000 from 5 paintings sold from the Signature exhibit. The Membership Matters campaign is underway to help attract and retain members, but we are seeing some member losses, so Deb and Shilpa will dig into the data about non-renewing members.

Treasurer's Report - Shirley Jordan

Shirley's spreadsheet is available to all and she advises that the bulk of our membership renewals in April and May could positively change the dues revenue outlook in the coming weeks. Shirley has also cut the checks for Waterworks award winners and Eileen has them ready to send when the announcement is public.

Corresponding Secretary - Conny Spann

Since our last meeting:

- Sent a robe with a get well note to Ann Breckon.
- Sent "thinking of you" note to Michele Usibelli who is dealing with her mother's illness.

Also working on two new Signature Members, certificates should go out in a week or so

- Nancy Grigsby
- Rose West

Agenda Section A: Items requiring Board input and/or decisions:

No issues submitted.

New Business

What's new in Social Media: Sarah Love and Elizabeth Houser

As noted above, Elizabeth Houser (Liz) is on the social media team doing the posts for Instagram. She recently took a new job that frees up her time to work on things she enjoys - like delving into more she can do to promote NWWs, so we're delighted that Liz can join us for the April board meeting.

LinkedIn had a page set up for NWWs waiting for someone to claim it. Liz did and it's running with posts we're using on other platforms. <https://www.linkedin.com/company/nwws/>

She is also utilizing Link Tree that we've had connected with Instagram for years. linktr.ee/nwws1939 Liz will share a few words about how these 2 new links can benefit Board members and the general NWWs membership.

Liz also created a BlueSky account for NWWs.

Discussion followed around the following points:

- It would be good if the NWWs site allowed members to post not only their website address, but some social media accounts.
- We are ahead of many watercolor societies in establishing our social media presence.
- We are competing for engagement in the attention economy. We need to continue to adapt and integrate our presence on all platforms likely to attract and retain members and watercolor/art enthusiasts.
- Reciprocal collaboration works.
- Hashtags are like keywords or topics that help index posts.
- @soandso tags are for specific people or groups/orgs.
- We have nearly 3K followers on Instagram - growing.
- Our newsletter can be used in new ways to help us grow. The newsletter reaches 1000 members and 2700 non-member recipients.
- We need ideas about how to convert the non-members to members.
- Posting videos to our social accounts will add vibrancy.
- We need help with graphic design for marketing and someone to help produce short 'reels' for our social media. Molly will call for these helpers at the next meeting and we may add categories to the volunteer form members use to indicate who they want to help NWWs.
- Mike Thoreson has video production expertise and is happy to share/consult as needed.

Other New Business:

Peggy W thanked all chairs who are sending reports in for section B of the agenda to help all volunteers stay informed and in synch.

Kristi Dyson shared that a buyer from the Signature Exhibit sent a note to her about the quality and excellence on display.

Molly M appreciated Sarah Hansen's comment, in her report below, about how the team made chairing Waterworks such a good experience.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Agenda Section B: Committee Reports/Updates to keep everyone informed:

Data Manager - Shilpa Bhadsalve

1. The WW2025 acceptance packets were created and sent out.
2. Nancy Grigsby has qualified for Signature membership, but will receive it after the exhibition goes up. Rose West has also applied for the signature membership, but will need to pay the back dues to qualify.
3. Jurors Yong Hong Zhong and Michele Usibelli have received 5 year courtesy memberships.
4. Membership report has continued to show a YTD decline of -10% - see attached.

Exhibitions: Waterworks 2025 - Sarah Hansen

Waterworks Show 2025 is progressing as planned:

1. All Press packets and acceptance packets have been emailed, received, and acknowledged by all artists accepted into the show.
2. At the time of this writing, there has been no need to use alternates.
3. The beautiful catalog has been designed by Molly, proofed by our team, and I believe sent to press (although this may need to be confirmed)
4. We are beginning to see accepted artists use the fabulous Press Release packet designed by Sarah Love. Artist's local publications have picked up and published stories.
5. The announcement press release for Waterworks has been distributed to our list of publications, museums, TV & radio announcements.
6. The artist awards reception is poised to commence via live webinar on April 25, 2025, from 5-7pm PST, as planned. I will be at the meeting.

Thank you to everyone on this amazing team. I barely had to do anything! You all are so fun to work with! It's been a joy and a pleasure to be chair this year.

Foundation - Mike Thoreson, Linda Sewerker, Peg Willett

Scholarship

Ann Breckon advised the Foundation board some months ago that she needs a co-chair and/or someone to take over the Foundation's college-level scholarship program in the future.

She is currently very ill and has been in hospital for some time.

NWWS Board Advisor Peggy Meyers graciously stepped up to help manage applications and judging preps, using the new online platform for this program. The Foundation Board is grateful beyond words for her support. Deb Roskopf also advises adding functionality to the platform for next year so that teachers' Letters of Recommendation (LOR) can be uploaded to the Scholarship platform, rather than being sent by email. This will ensure LOR's are attached to the application and make it easy for the judges to review them.

This year's judges, Mike, Charlene and Linda, are currently reviewing applicants and we'll be ready to announce winners in the coming weeks. We will synch up with Sarah Love on timing.

The board opened but then tabled a discussion about whether to expand scholarship applicant eligibility to colleges level arts programs beyond the PNW.

Art For Kids: Linda Sewerker

Linda is also seeking a committee member or co-chair for the Art For Kids program so we can include more primary and secondary school grants in this aspect of the Foundation's work.

ACTION ITEM: Any current volunteer or board member who would like to get more involved with the Foundation's work in either program should be touch with Peg, Mike, Linda or Charlene, the current Foundation board members. This team meets just 3 or 4 times a year and we welcome new people to help us implement our programs. Please join us!

Publicity: Sarah Love:

Water Works Exhibition

- Distributed press release to 114 media. Pickups so far: <https://www.shorelineareanews.com/2025/03/northwest-watercolor-society-2025.html>
- Wrote artists' PR template for accepted artists to use for local media. Member Gina Judy used it and it was picked up by the *Herald Star* in her home town in Ohio. <https://www.heraldstaronline.com/news/community/2025/03/local-artist-chosen-for-nwws-exhibit/>

Membership ads

- Two of the membership ads have posted and over 1300 views so far. People are noticing.

Open Exhibition

- Began media research and planning by contacting *American Watercolor* weekly and Cascade PBS.

Social Media

- Wrote 26 posts for Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest and supplied images.

- Had team post a reel provided by Alex Hillkurtz that took off on Instagram with over a 1000 views.
- Liz Houser claimed the NWWWS LinkedIn page and is making posts. NWWWS members can add the link to their LinkedIn pages as volunteer work, board positions, etc to get credit for experience. <https://www.linkedin.com/company/nwwws/>
- The NWWWS Instagram has had Link Tree in Instagram to connect to the NWWWS website. Liz Houser has organized Link Tree to make it easy for anyone to connect to our website directly to where they want to go. <linktr.ee/nwwws1939>
- The two attached PDF's show how these features look.
- Checking into other social media platforms like Bluesky which attracts a younger audience.

Workshops: Karen Robinette

Waterworks online spring workshops:

Techniques & Composition for Dramatic Painting

Michele Usibelli

April 23-24, 2025, 9 am to 4 pm PDT, on Zoom

Limit 22 participants

Master Color, Light, & Shadow in Watercolor

Yong Hong Zhong

April 28-29, 2025, 9 am to 4 pm PDT, on Zoom

Limit 22 participants

Both workshops are \$175 for NWWWS members and \$225 for non-members

Registration is now open online at nwws.org

Registration Totals

Michele Usibelli –11

Yong Hong Zhong – 17

Molly Murrah - updates on work in several areas:

Workshops International

All artists contracted with NWWWS for WI workshops have signed the contract Addendum giving us permission to sell viewing privileges to their workshops on our site. The workshops already completed over six months ago will be posted as soon as we finalize the platform, and other recordings will be made available 6 months after each workshop takes place.

The payment platform has been mostly completed by the web developer. Debbie and I are working on the final details

Alex Hillkurtz has 37 registrants for his workshop on May 10th. We are continuing to promote and hope to fill.

2025 Waterworks Exhibition

I finished designing and finalizing the 32-page WW catalog and it will be uploaded to Printing Center USA at the end of this week. I ordered the catalog last week in order to get a discount, but they allowed me to upload the file *after* their special discount offer was already over so we could still get the reduction.

I am now working on the 80-slide presentation for the WW reception.

Discussion with Lawyer about *Hot Press* legal issues

We heard back from our lawyer about the instances of material submitted to *Hot Press* that we had questions about, and she said that given the uses we were referring to, she thought we would be fine using the materials submitted.

Jurors / Instructors

I have not had time to send out a new Juror/Instructor presentation for future artists to the Artists' Selection Committee. Just have had too much NWWs work already on my plate.

Agenda Section C: Programs proceeding as planned, but no news to share.

NO REPORTS