ABANA
Board of Directors Meeting
June 3, 2020

1. Call to order: President Leigh Morrell called the meeting to order at 8:15 pm EST

   PRESENT: Jim Archambault, Laura Armstrong, Jerry Boyd, John Dittmeier, Doug Eichert, Scott Kretschmer, Leigh Morrell, Tom Owens, Linda Tanner, Bob Valentine, John Williams

   Absent: Victor Plitt, Ray Grosshans, Annie Arthur, Eddie Rainey

   Others in attendance: Andy Quittner, Gerald Franklin, Josh Reynolds

2. Secretary’s report:

   The minutes were sent previously, for Board review.

   Approval of the minutes of May 6, 2020

   In a motion by Laura Armstrong, seconded by Jim Archambault it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of May 6, 2020. Vote unanimous

3. Treasurer’s report:

   Treasurer’s report taken up later in the meeting under Finance Committee report.

4. Matters arising out of the minutes:

   None

5. President’s report:

   Leigh started by mentioning that today was the day the 2020 Conference was to start.

   This past month, Leigh contacted the chair and table rental company for the conference, in an attempt to get a deposit returned, unsuccessfully. Contacted the Washington County Fairground to negotiate a resolution to the Fairground Use Agreement, given that we were not able to use the fairgrounds for the conference due to COVID-19, but was unable to come to terms. Facilitated the moving of the trailer from the fairgrounds to Johnstown. Work with prospective candidates for the board. Traveled to Bob Menards to pick up the forge parts made by NEB and the Peter Wright anvil for the raffle. Contacted expired members in an effort to get them to re-new their memberships. And sent Anvil’s Ring and Hammers Blow copies to prospective printing companies.

   Leigh went through reports from JoAnn and Frank from the Central Office, for the past month.

   Emails are sent out to members whose membership is about to expire and after the have expired. Bob reviewed the messages and found that they are not personalized and could be done better. He and Laura will work on creating better messages to be sent out.
There is still an issue with Network Solutions and ABANA’s domain name. The original purchase of the domain name was done by Bill Clemens, he also was the registrant for the domain. Now that Bill has passed away, Frank has been unable to get Network Solutions to change the registrant to the Central Office. Leigh has asked Andy Quittner to get involved and help resolve the issue.

Scott mentioned an issue he had found in a link to vote for ABANA board members. The issue has been resolved. It was agreed that a PPM protocol should be put together for future voting process. Bob agreed to put a PPM protocol together, with the help of the Elections Committee.

6. Committee reports:

Awards: Scott Kretschmer

Nothing to report

Affiliates:

Nothing to report

By-Laws & PPM: Bob Valentine

Nothing to report.

Competition: John Williams

Nothing to report.

Communications & Technology: John Dittmeier, Annie Arthur, John Williams

Bob mentioned that on the ABANA website Communications & Technology are separate Committees. In the past board members felt that both committees should be combined due to overlapping responsibilities. It was agreed that John Dittmeier, would convene the committees and work on the question of a combined committee.

Education Outreach & Professional Development: Co-Chairs Jim Archambault, Doug Eichert

John Dittmeier suggested an Action Item: A motion for ABANA to enter into a two-year contract, July-June, with the non-profit Candid/Foundation Database Online for $758.00 in order to research grant opportunities and to develop grant applications.

Doug Eichert made the motion, Tom Owens second it. Under discussion Laura said that she is able to access the Candid/Foundation Database Online through her public library for free. After discussion it was agreed that the information is available at the public library is the same information. Bob suggested that we hold off subscribing to the service until an Executive Director is hired. John D. suggested that an monthly subscription be considered. Laura agreed to look into potential grant opportunities for digitizing ABANA’s VHS library and having the Controlled Forging lessons videoed rather than the current print lessons.

In a motion made by Tom Owens, seconded by Bob Valentine it was voted to table the motion until more information is available. Vote Unanimous
Elections: Co-Chairs Doug Eichert, John Williams

Discussed previously under President’s report.

Finance: Bob Valentine

Tom Owens spoke about inconsistencies in the current accounting process that he and Bob Valentine have identified. Both felt the chart of accounts and process for accounting need updating and fine tuning. Tom has asked for and received a proposal from Debbie Franklin, King & King Associates CPAs. The cost for modifying the chart of accounts and creating a Fiscal Policy and Procedures manual would be $2,000. Bob suggested that having a manual would be helpful for the Central Office in that it would give written direction as to how ABANA’s accounts should be kept, eliminating questions as to process. Laura asked if ABANA has had an audit of its books in the past. Tom and Bob explained that the only thing that has been done in the past is a compilation review, which is far short of an audit.

In a motion made by Tom Owens, seconded by Jim Archambault, it was voted to add $2,000 to the budget to hire King & King Associates CPAs to creation of a Fiscal Policy and Procedures Manual, Vote unanimous.

Grants: Scott Kretschmer

Nothing to report at this time.

History and Archives: John Dittmeier

John continues to upload pertinent documents into the Groups.io digital archives from both past and present. He believes that the following documents should be in the archives. If all concur, he asked how to obtain the documents? Confidential information, such as monetary compensation, could be blocked out.

They are; Contract for Executive Secretary, Contract for Information Technology Specialist, Contract for Anvil’s Ring Editor, Contract for Hammer’s Blow Editor, Contracts for Publishers, Printers, and Mailings, Contracts for Conferences, Insurance Policies.

Membership services: Linda Tanner

Discussed previously under President’s report was the process for contacting expiring and expired members.

Publications: Victor Plitt

Leigh spoke about the upcoming Anvil’s Ring. The summer issue was increased by four pages to accommodate articles from smiths who would have demonstrated at the 2020 Conference. Leigh felt Mark Kochan out did himself and it will be a wonderful issue.

Sales: Victor Plitt

Jerry purchased a shirt from Shopify and experienced an issue with the collar, Victor has been made aware of it and is working to remedy the issue. Jerry felt Victor was on top of things.
Strategic planning: Co-Chairs Linda Tanner, Tom Owens

Jim has put together a draft budget for an event to be held in Johnstown, April 22-24, 2021. As part of the planning Leigh and Jim will be going to Johnstown on June 13th to review the potential site and meet with John Dubnansky and Melissa Radonavic. The hope is that there will be a public event forging area as well as a forging area for demonstrators registered attendees. Jim would like the event to be a family event that is affordable with possibly three demonstrators and a teaching tent. Leigh pointed we could include a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new ABANA office in Johnstown. Also discussed was various options for the event and potential demonstrators. Leigh and Jim will report back to the committee after they return from Johnstown.

2022 Conference: Tom reported the Strategic Planning Committee had met with the Texas group headed by Dan Richman, last evening, and the consensus is that the 2022 Conference be awarded to the North Texas Blacksmiths Association headed by Dan Richman and Fred Cole. Tom felt the venue was more than adequate for our needs. The group has put a preliminary budget together, which needs some adjustments. They also have a good core of affiliates that would help.

In a motion made by Tom Owens, seconded by Linda Tanner it was voted to award the 2022 Conference to the North Texas Blacksmiths Association headed by Dan Richman and Fred Cole. Vote unanimous.

Technology: John Williams

(See Communications & Technology above.)

2020 Conference: Bob Valentine

Leigh reviewed the circumstances surrounding the disagreement over the Use Agreement for the Washington County Fairgrounds in particular the fact that we were not able to use the fairgrounds due to COVID-19 pandemic and executive orders of the Governor of NY. Bob relayed his conversation with Bob Menard and the difference of opinion on the use fee. Bob Valentine felt that we should compensate the fairgrounds for storage of the ABANA trailer but not the full Use Agreement fee having not been able to use the fairgrounds. Bob mentioned that the Goshen Agricultural Society, which he is a member, refunded deposits in full for events that were unable to be held at its fairgrounds. Andy Quittner said the same thing happened with his fairgrounds in Texas.

After a lengthy discussion on the value of having the trailer stored in a meadow across the street from the fairgrounds for the 23 months, a motion was made by Tom Owens seconded by Scott Kretschmer to authorize Bob Valentine to negotiate a settlement with the Washington County Fairgrounds on the question of the Fairgrounds Use Agreement, with a cap of $1,500. Vote unanimous.

The board felt it important that their reasons for not paying the full Use Agreement fee be posted on ABANA’s Facebook page, John Dittmeier will facilitate the posting.

Exhibition: Laura Armstrong

Nothing new.
Johnstown Implementation:

A was notice posted within the blacksmithing community that ABANA was looking to hire an Executive Director with a deadline of 5:00 pm on May 29 for notices of intent by prospective candidates. As of the deadline only one notice was received. Leigh will now post the opening more broadly including in Johnstown PA area. It is hoped that the new posting will generate more prospective candidates.

7. Old business:

Bob announced that the raffle tickets were sold out in record time, all tickets were sold in one month instead of the anticipated 3 months. Ticket were purchased by 338 individuals from the USA, 15 from Canada and 3 from Australia. The average sale of tickets was 5.6 tickets. The drawing will be August 1st with Leigh drawing the winning tickets. Bob thanked his wife Deb for all the work she did in helping with the raffle sales including labeling the tickets and envelopes to send everyone their tickets.

Leigh mentioned that Bob now has the commemorative Slack Tub Bourbon keg signed by many smiths. Bob will photograph the keg before it’s actioned off next year.

Jerry Boyd mentioned that facilities committee will be putting a newsletter out soon, encouraging affiliates to get geared up and start having meetings and demonstrations to the public. As part of the encouragement he inquired as to whether the Affiliates Mini Grant program still existed. There seems be some confusion due to what is posted on the ABANA website. Leigh assured him the program still existed and said he would contact the Central Office to correct the website. Also agreed was to post the grant opportunity on the Grants Committee web page.

8. New business:

None

9. Adjournment:

In a motion made by Scott Kretschmer seconded by Doug Eichert it was voted to adjourn at 10:22 pm. Vote unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Valentine, Secretary