

Warner Free Lecture Trustees Meeting

In-person at the Council on Aging Senior Center, 16 Lancaster County Rd., Harvard

Minutes for November 13, 2023

Trustees Present: Jeff Boudreau, Michael Kilian (Chair), Nancy Meyer, Steve Peisch, Billy Salter, Sheila Simollardes.

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:24 PM.

1. Review and approve minutes from October 3, 2023.

VOTE: Sheila moved, Mike seconded approval of the minutes from October 3, 2023, with one correction, all in favor.

2. Review Roxana Trabulsi Lecture.

Despite a change of venue (because the library's elevator was malfunctioning) and a last-minute scramble to get the audio/visual equipment set up, the Roxana Trabulsi lecture was well attended and interesting. Q&A lasted about 30 minutes and attendees asked good questions. Mike thanked everyone for pitching in to make it a great evening. We cleaned up and left the room in perfect condition, but someone must have used it afterwards. In future, it's best practice to document how we leave the space.

Steve joined the meeting.

Mike will check that we advertise presentations one, two and three weeks ahead of time in *The Harvard Press*. Because of the change of venue, we got a headline position in the *Press*. "First come/first served" was emphasized on the website, Next Door, and Facebook.

3. Finances.

Mike requested that Billy give a review of finances at our December meeting. Mike will submit a request for reimbursement for toner.

4. Status of the Massachusetts Cultural Council Local Cultural Council (MCCLCC) Grant.

Jeff worked with Mike to submit an LCC grant application before the October 17 deadline for an additional musician for the February 9 presentation. We should hear in January. If we receive the grant, advertising must include a standard blurb from the Mass Cultural Council.

5. Start working on next year's speakers.

We sketched out a rough timeline for building the speaker schedule: begin brainstorming speaker ideas in late fall; contact speakers by February; confirm dates by March/April. Once

our schedule has gelled, we can reach out to local organizations and groups about collaboration or co-sponsorship.

Mike circulated a long list of possible speakers sent to him by Trustees. He grouped speakers by topic: History, Science and Natural History, Personal Experiences, Environment (include Climate Change), Music, Health, and Travel. Individuals who suggest presenters should pitch their top one or two suggestions. We should include a column with stipend information for each presenter. It would also be helpful to include information about the speakers, e.g. a quick summary and/or website link.

Nancy asked whether there had ever been consideration of doing fewer lectures so we could offer a higher honorarium to well-known speakers. It's unlikely we could offer a fee that is close to their usual fee. It may be worth asking them to speak pro bono with reimbursement for lodging. We can offer book sales as incentive. Our culture has been to provide lectures on a variety of topics, from local speakers. Frequent lectures also help keep us top of mind.

We discussed possible speakers and agreed to begin reaching out to gauge availability and interest from potential speakers. That list is included below.

- Steve: Randy Hodgkinson, Tracy Kraus
- Mike: Ilyon Woo, Ilyasah Shabazz, Marty Baron, Harvard Salata Institute/Center for Environment
- Sheila: Janet Langhart, Harvey Leonard
- Jeff: Mark Field, Jim Sullivan
- Nancy: J. Dennis Robinson, Stephanie Borns-Weil, Sy Montgomery's agent
- Billy: Caroline Uhler, Allen Rutberg, Captain Phillips

Some names were removed from consideration because they are not (or low probability to be) available/interested, or they gave a presentation recently, or the topic was thought to be too esoteric. They are: Steve Puleo, Lynne McKenney Lydish, Emily Sweeney, Richard Smith, Anne Beatie, Joseph Minervini, Ty Gagne, Christine Jerome, Mary Mazzio, Larry Tye, Kathy Elkind.

6. More marketing ideas.

Our marketing on web site, FB and NextDoor seems to be working. We will continue to work with the *Press*. We need to figure out how to get information posted in the Town Calendar and on the "Home News & Announcements" page on the town's website.

7. Next meeting is on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 6:15 at the CoA Center.

8. Meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Nancy seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Meyer, Secretary.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Trustees begin reaching out to potential speakers (see #5, above).
- Billy present finances at December meeting.
- Mike post draft WFL policies on a “Trustees only” section of the website.
- Nancy forward a neighbor’s email with program suggestion.
- Billy advertise the John Hanson Mitchell presentation to the Garden Club.