**Military Writers Society of America**

**Special Board Meeting, June 14, 2023**

**Minutes**

A special meeting of the MWSA board of directors via Zoom was called to order at 12:01 pm EST on June 14, 2023. Present were: Jim Greenwald, President; Valerie Ormond, Vice-President; Ruth W. Crocker, Secretary; Hugh Simpson, Treasurer, Bob Doerr, WYS coordinator; John Cathcart, Kathleen Rodgers, Gary Zelinski, Dane Zeller, Directors at Large. Rev. Bill McDonald, Founder, was absent.

Valerie opened the meeting with a review of budget items that had been sent out to the board for decision on a polling sheet.

1. **WYS Advertising** – Nay. Paid advertising for advertising the WYS program is not considered necessary at this time because Ruth has been able to secure free advertising in the New London region due to the fact that MWSA is a non-profit organization. She has also been in touch with those students who signed up for the previously cancelled workshop in 2021. As of mid-June, there are 8 students signed up for the upcoming workshop.
2. **Paid assistant for public relations and website** – Tasked. This received a Yay vote but decisions have been deferred to the Communications Committee Chair and a Media/PR Subcommittee when that Subcommittee is established. A meeting will be held via Zoom during the week of June 26 – 30, 2023.
3. **Paid Website Assistance** – Tasked. 2-3 people have stepped up to help out. Valerie requested a time-line to figure out the best approach to help John with the website. John clarified that this would be a one-time expense and then reevaluate at the end of the year. John suggested that this be tabled until October 2023 after the annual meeting because of time needed now for Awards Committee. John and Gary will meet and plan after the meeting.
4. **Advertising in magazines** – Deferred. There is support for this, but the Communications Chair is currently still researching this idea.
5. **Editor reimbursement for conference fee** – Nay. This was taken off the table because the Editor of Dispatches was not interested in being compensated for the MWSA conference fee.
6. **Photographer for Annual Meeting** – Deferred. This item has been tabled until December board meeting. Valerie will put out a request to the membership for a volunteer to photograph major events at the annual meeting in New London, CT in September, 2023. Valerie will also reach out to Joe Epley to see if he is coming to the conference in September and if he would be willing to volunteer as roving photographer. Ruth will inform the professional photographer she had located for this year’s meeting that we will not be hiring her. (Her cost for the conference, plus WYS, would have been $1000.)
7. **Honorarium for Zoom workshop leaders** – Yay. Gary would like to fund the screenwriter who recently taught a workshop because he is not a member of MWSA. Suggested payment would be $100 per session for all non-members who teach. It was suggested that, if a notable author speaks, they could also be offered a Challenge Coin as a token of appreciation. Funding for this will come from the Outreach budget which has been underspending since it was established. The Outreach Committee Chair will coordinate with Gary (Online Education Chair) regarding funding. In the future, if there are not enough funds in the Outreach budget to support this, we will revisit potential additional funding from the board as a separate budget item. Reassess in 2024.
8. **Face Book Boosts** – Yay. Gary has a volunteer who can facilitate creating the posts that would be boosted. $400 is earmarked for Face Book boosting cost.
9. **Buying MWSA books** – Nay. Not a good idea at this time because there is no one to manage it and it could be a time-consuming activity. Perhaps later when there is a larger volunteer support team.
10. **MWSA Challenge Coin** – Yay. Coins should especially be used for special recognition rather than offered for sale on the website. They would be for people outside of MWSA who have gone above and beyond to help the organization. Communications Chair, Gary Zelinski, and his wife, Lillian, have agreed to manage the design and production of the coins. The budget approved, for the first 100 coins, is $1000. Treasurer Hugh Simpson discussed the potential use of proceeds from the Money Market account as the subsidy for the coins. The coin was approved for ordering by the Vice President on 6/15/23.
11. **MWSA Swag** – Yay (as long as MWSA establishes a drop-ship online store so that MWSA is not carrying inventory). Lillian Zelinski is looking into options and Gary will coordinate with John regarding establishing an online store. Valerie agreed to send links to known vendors.

**Additional Meeting items**

1. **Scholarship Program** – Jim sent out notes re: program. Kathy posed the potential problem of competition between a 40-year-old veteran and a high school student. Valerie clarified that it is in our bylaws that we have this kind of program. The program also increases the visibility and mission of MWSA. Perhaps there should be two applications; one for high school students and one for older veterans. A dedicated volunteer ( Rob Lofthouse) is now overseeing the program. We will revisit the Scholarship Program on July 15, 2023 and try to decide what to do going forward.
2. John Cathcart has agreed to join the **Finance committee** as the Awards Committee representative as of 6/14/23. John expressed a need for more specific information about current financial status. Hugh will send out a P&L report to the board. (Note: 2022 documents sent to the board on 6/1523.)
3. **President’s Award** policy approved. John will add policy to website. The board approved the continued purchase of Award regalia for honoring recipients of Awards (ribbons, etc).
4. Gary requested board members ask MWSA members for articles for **Dispatches.** Presently, most articles are written by board members. More outreach to members is in the works to ensure that members are aware of the benefits of submitting articles. (Send articles (1500 words or less) to Gary.) Dane has volunteered to help Gary solicit articles from writers in other literary circles to expand our outreach to more writing groups.
5. The board agreed to form a **Bylaws Review Committee** to be established at the next board meeting in order to ensure compliance with Pennsylvania bylaws rules. The overall review will assess whether our bylaws are coordinated with current MWSA priorities and our established mission in our IRS non-profit filing status. Ruth is keeping track of communications and historical documents within the organization.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00pm EST. Next meeting of the board will take place during the annual meeting in September, 2023.