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**Minutes of the NWCA Executive Board Meeting
November 23, 1996
Chicago, Illinois
NCTE**

Present: Michael Pemberton, Pete Carino, Eric Hobson, Joan Mullin, Jean Kiedaisch, Denise Stephenson, Jim Upton, Jenny Jordon, Pam Childers, Beth Boquet, Dennis Paoli, Millie Davis, Kate Browne, Paula Gillespie

Because Christina Murphy, the President, was absent, Joan Mullin, First Vice President, presided. Because we did not have a quorum, we decided that the motions that would be made would be discussed and voted on by mail and e-mail.

Secretary's Report: Paula Gillespie reported that starter kits were going out but needed to be revised and updated.

Treasurer's Report: Michael Pemberton presented a breakdown of our debits and credits.

Chair's Report: Joan Mullin pointed out that certain business had to be taken care of immediately. Calls for nominations for the Distinguished Service Award must go right out in *WLN* along with nominations for best book and best article. We also need nominations for at-large members of NWCA.

Joan reported that the calls for proposals for the 1997 NWCA Conference are out. Penny Bird has graduate students helping her organize. For the last national, some officers flew to St. Louis and sorted the proposals on-site and helped design the program and sessions. In traveling to the site, NWCA members tried out the directions from the airport to the hotels, tried shuttle services and the Metrolink, looked at the conference site and the sites of other activities. This is done to maintain continuity and ensure equal representation of NWCA interests and members (some who had worked on the New Orleans conference also worked on the St. Louis program); Joan hopes that some will be able to go to Utah.

This year, as has been true in the past, there will be no conference theme.

Pete Carino asked if there were any plans to regularize the time frame for the national conferences. Joan replied that it all depended on which regionals planned to host it.

NWCA Press, General Editor's Report: Byron Stay sent a memo detailing the success of the press to date. *Writing Center Perspectives* is selling regularly. The press is waiting for a completed manuscript that has been given a favorable first review; it will be reviewed again by two outside readers. Two more completed manuscripts are expected in the near future.

Joan reported that the high school writing center meeting that afternoon at NCTE was very well-attended and that we need to make our publications more visible to NCTE members through the conference book displays.

Writing Lab Newsletter: Muriel Harris and Mary Jo Turley have updated the information sheet on the newsletter to go into the startup packet. They wanted to remind regionals to send in information at least a month before publication.

Writing Center Journal: Dave Healy's term runs through spring 1997. Anyone interested in editing the journal should contact Dave. We will need a statement of institutional support. The ideal situation would have a union between a high school and a college person.

New Business:

The New England Writing Centers Association wants to change its name to indicate its inclusiveness of New York State. They will notify the national when they do change their name. Dennis Paoli reported that the CUNY WCA is struggling as universities are downsizing; some members of organizations have lost their jobs. It may be time for CUNY and NEWCA to join forces in mutual support.

The secretary should be responsible for updating the starter kit. Beth Boquet will work with Paula Gillespie on this. While the kit can be set up on a website, many people still do not have access. Jeannette Jordan can be involved as the high school representative. Michael Pemberton has a master bibliography which can be a starting point for a revised writing center recommended reading list.

Joan reported on accreditation: Jeanne Simpson, Byron Stay, and Joe Law have done preliminary work. Now we need to talk about setting up an implementation committee. The task force headed by Joe Law noted that the group (perhaps not called "accrediting") should be regional in nature. We need to stress to all concerned that we are not talking about a template but rather a contextualized study of a particular center's response to institutional needs and constraints. A discussion ensued.

Beth noted that we need to take a vote on it. She expressed concern, not about visiting, finding goals, etc., but about the term “accreditation”; it implies failure and universally applicable standards.

Joan pointed out that the model is WPA, but we need to avoid the money trap, where schools do not seek accreditation because they cannot afford it. That is why we need regional teams—ones who know the constraints of the region and state, and can read institutional needs.

Eric suggested that we need to call it assessment, and make it clear that it is not summative but formative.

Dennis said that problems will arise if administrations see writing center people doing the assessing.

Pam expressed concern about secondary centers and wondered if they should do a self-study.

Further discussion ensued about what to do next.

The committee discussed the proposal for the dissertation scholarship we had received, and it was agreed that we not award a fellowship at this time.

Nominations for second vice president: elections normally take place at NCTE, but there was not a quorum, so votes will take place by mail and e-mail. It was agreed that the two candidates, Eric Hobson and Beth Boquet, will send biographical statements to the secretary, who will mail and e-mail the members of the board.

We need to call for nominations for at-large representatives.

Motion: Paula moved in favor of a two-year term for presidents. Seconded by Pam. We will have e-mail discussions of this and take a vote. In the discussion we will consider whether to keep the position of second vice president, since this person would be obliged to attend meetings for a total of six years.

Joan: We need more of a presence at NCTE, need to be more visible, possibly by offering tutorials to conference-goers at a table at the book exhibit.

Eric moved and Pam seconded that we establish a booth at CCCC and NCTE. It would cost \$350. The presses will be asked to chip in.

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Discussion led to the idea that we need more publicity in general, need better communication with high school people. NCTE has said it will support our activities, and we should take advantage by publishing ads in their journals. We should write collaborative articles with high school and college writing centers and publish them in *College English*, *English Journal*, and *CCC* to draw a larger audience to our own publications.

Michael moved and Paula seconded: we add a position of publicist to the executive committee. This is open for discussion.

Submitted by Paula Gillespie