



**California Writers Club**  
**November 8, 2009**  
**Central Board Annual Meeting Minutes**  
**Location: Holiday Inn Express, Oakland, CA**

Representatives present:

(Branch) (Rep or proxy)

Berkeley: Linda Brown

Central Coast: Joyce Krieg

East Sierra: Donna McCrohan-Rosenthal

Fremont Area Writers: Nancy Curteman

High Desert: Carol Warren

Inland Empire: Harry Ramage

Long Beach: Allene Symons

Mount Diablo: David George

Orange County: Carol Celeste

SF/Peninsula: Linda Okerlund, proxy

Redwood: Kate Farrell

Sacramento: Margie Yee Webb

South Bay: Dave LaRoche

Tri-Valley: Kathy Urban

West Valley: David George, proxy

Writers of Kern: Sandy Moffett

Absent: Marin, San Fernando Valley

A quorum was present with 10 votes. Late arrivals brought the votes to 16. Others present: Casey Wilson, president, Karen Batchelor, Redwood, Lloyd Lofthouse, Berkeley, Bob Garfinkle, Fremont, Kathy Garfinkle.

**Proceedings:**

*The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. by President Casey Wilson in the Chair with Carol Celeste, Secretary, present.*

*Minutes for the July 19, 2009, meeting were presented and approved as corrected. Forum minutes for Joyce Krieg Ina Coolbrith award and Jack London Ceremony, were presented and approved.*

**Standing Committee reports:**

**Membership:** A report dated September 30, 2009, prepared and presented by Dale King shows 1077 members with 17 life members.

**Motion:** by Dale King second Margie Yee Webb at 8:10 a.m.

I move that in honor of the Centennial year, the Central Board recognize our lifetime members by paying for the rocker tabs.

The motion passed. Aye 10, Nay 0, Abstain 0

**Action: Repts** send their members' email addresses for those wishing electronic delivery of *The Bulletin* and distribution preference to Dale.

**Executive:**

1) The certificate of registration for the Service Mark California Writers Club, the logo and CWC was received from the US Patent & Trademark Office and presented.

2) Casey Wilson explained the situation with the CWC 501 (c)(3) IRS status and his correspondence from Mr. Slaughter and conversations relating to the omission from the Publication 78 data base.

**Action:** Casey Wilson will respond to Mr. Slaughter's letter dated October 15.

**Motion:** by David George, second Dave LaRoche at 9:05 a.m.

I, David George, move that if the California Writers Club is not listed in the next published IRS Publication 78 database, that the CWC treasurer contract for professional assistance to resolve this matter with the IRS, expenses not to exceed \$3,000.

The motion passed. Aye 16, Nay 0, Abstain 0

**Treasurer's Report:**

*Summary report* dated July 1, 2009, to September 30, 2009, prepared by Kathy Urban was presented.

Wells Fargo checking account balance was \$25,547.10.

Wells Fargo CD \$18,077.24 matures Nov. 15, 2009.

Wells Fargo CD \$5,338.34 matures Dec. 12, 2009.

**Bulletin:**

1) Joyce Krieg reported that Casey Wilson has 100 extra copies of the Centennial edition of The Bulletin and requested one for her files; gave Casey a CD with past newsletter issues to post on the Web site; offered options for newsletter distribution in both print and electronic formats.

2) Casey Wilson, without objection, appointed Carol Wood as The Bulletin editor and chair of The Bulletin committee. After objections, the matter went to vote.

**Motion:** by Dave LaRoche, second Nancy Curteman at 9:44 a.m.

I move to accept Carol Wood as The Bulletin editor.

The motion passed. Aye 6, Nay 4, Abstain 4, Present 2

**New Branch Development:**

Casey Wilson appointed Kate Farrell as chair of this committee.

**Scholarship:**

Allene Symons reported that activities are waiting for the reorganization plan.

**Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, and Standards:**

1) Dave LaRoche distributed a summary of the re-organization committee's preliminary plan.

**Motion:** by Dave LaRoche, second Sandy Moffett at 11:05 a.m.

Accept "initial summary" dated 11-08-2009 as reflecting the Central Board's intentions regarding organizational changes and encouraging the Bylaws Committee to move forward into a more definitive development. The Initial Summary presented for vote states: **Re-Org**

– **Initial Summary 11-8-2009**

Presented by the Bylaws Committee, membered-up for purposes of reviewing the organizational change proposed by our president during our July meeting.

Dave LaRoche, chair  
 Kathy Urban  
 David George  
 Carol Celeste  
 Glenn Wood  
 Casey Wilson exofficio

In opening the door to reorganization, your committee took a bottoms-up look in view of the mission our CWC holds forth and came up with a different idea. These ideas are presented below for purposes of obtaining your confidence that we move in a direction consistent with Representatives' wishes.

Generally, the re-org committee agrees to the following. (NO major overhaul but rather a few tweaks to accommodate ideas that have been popularly circulated for years.) This may not be all inclusive but it is much of the direction the committee is currently heading.

At a point, a finite statement will be made available as a second motion of confidence, likely on e-business. From that, assuming approval, our official documents will be changed accordingly and with another vote of approval, as currently required, the ideas put into effect.

Our first cut follows. The consensus numbers indicate: yes vote/out of those responding. All members of the committee have not responded to all points.

- Reduced CB meetings (two max) with concomitant reduction in fees to the CB. Dues would not change at the branch level.
  - Reasoning: half of our budget is spent in meeting expense. Much of what the Central Board does now can be done with fewer meetings and the e-business facility. If the CB's responsibilities are further reduced, see below, even less F2F time is required. Of the expenses incurred, travel reimbursement is far the largest expense. If overwhelmed with F2F meeting need, a two day meeting is far preferable to another meeting (2/3rds of the total reimbursement is travel). Assuming only this reduction in expense, the dues a branch pays the CB could be reduced by 20%.
  - Committee consensus: 4/4 responding
- Review and adjustment of member qualifications (including an address of self/e-publishing), status, initiation fee, etc.
  - Reasoning: Publication methods have changed dramatically and continue to change. If we continue to classify on the basis of trade publication and similar, very good writers may be overlooked or misclassified. It seems a better choice to put this whole thing in the hands of the branches with guidelines from the CB and to judge the quality of writing by the writing itself.

Many fine works have gone unpublished for years, then caught on. On the other hand, crap is occasionally published if a fad or other demand is perceived by the publisher. Or the publisher has financial arrangements

with distributors, wholesalers, editors et al, that make it more feasible to publish than not.

Self publishing in many forms, e-publishing, blogging, digital readers, cell phone apps and who knows what tomorrow, have drawn many good writers away from traditional methods.

- Committee consensus: 2/2 responding
- Regional associations are encouraged, will be informal, and if funded, funded directly by member branches. Regional associations will be bound by corporate charter and subordinate docs, but have no reporting responsibility other than to the branches they represent. Branches may or may not form or join a regional association.
  - Reasoning: Writing, the education of writers, the stuff of promoting both is better accomplished in an informal if more dedicated group. Regional associations are smaller, less encumbered with administration, and will find substantially more enthusiasm and opportunity for the implementation of “mission.”
 

The NorCal Group, now into its second half-year, has seen the reality of this focus and energy described above and proof positive that this sort of association can work.
  - Committee consensus: 5/5 responding
- CB representation as is except votes available to reps proportional to branch population.
  - Reasoning: Our club is made up of its members, they should be heard equally as rules are made governing their behavior and dispensing their dues. Given our representational structure, one rep for each collection of members, regardless of size, this is the only way that can happen. It is an application of our historic democratic process, ubiquitous throughout our nation (and others) – one man, one vote.
 

Your committee chair advocates one vote for the branch, one vote for first block of fifty branch members, one vote for the next 80 and a maximum of four votes. This is a move in the correct direction.
  - Committee consensus: 1/4 responding, 2 maybes
- CB responsibilities will focused and limited and include a central PR office to handle all public relations (Bulletin, Website, Outreach, etc.), membership, insurance, financial accounting and reporting, recognition and awards, the management of e-business, and all/only things related.
  - Reasoning: All but the PR office are mandated by the state as a part of our charter obligations. The PR office would plan and implement vehicles for communications: garner new members, refer quality and helpful contacts, maintain our history, and a “community” outreach to maintain prestige – reestablish our mark.
 

Our Central Board has failed or been only marginally successful at everything else it has tried. History, Anthology, conferences, scholarships. We do well at establishing governance, lets go with our success.
  - Committee consensus: 4/4 responding

- Bylaws, P&Ps will be reviewed for purposes of simplification and a realistic reflection of what and who we are today and into the future. Handbook for Reps might incorporate much of what now resides in P&Ps
  - Reasoning: A hard look at our current P&Ps reveals a need to simplify. Much of what is included applies to the branches and their members, many of whom don't care to wade through and are confused when they do. Also, representatives, new to the board, are not familiar with how to maneuver within its rules of operation and thus are ineffective relative to their branch for a while. Both of these undesirable results can be mitigated with a simplification and perhaps a handbook for reps.
  - Committee consensus: 3/3 responding
- An emphasis on the democratic/representative processes, implicit but not necessarily universally understood.
  - Reasoning: Often new but also more timid representatives, while harboring excellent ideas, may be overcome with the strident noise of experience. It is crucial to a body, such as ours, that everyone attending be heard. This is a leadership challenge and the intent of this point is to establish in our behavior and docs a cultural change that actively solicits and invites those quieter notions and encourages those, who might otherwise only observe, to get actively involved.
  - Committee consensus: 2 and a maybe/3 responding
- An emphasis on the rotation of leadership so as to better reflect the to-often only whispered consciousness of the organization.
  - Reasoning: One leader for too long becomes stale, loses vision, the predicate for being in the seat in the first place. Occasionally a long-seated person assumes ownership of all movement. When a person makes the organization theirs, others find difficulty contesting the seat, even though deemed better than the incumbent. When we constituents are paying attention, we vote in a new but often we ourselves are not close or energetic or courageous enough to get up from our seats. Term limits are popular these days as they force rotation. This point is not completely wrung out by the committee, but sufficed to say, we suggest some form of rotation of office.
  - Committee consensus: 3/3 responding
- Casey's plan as proposed in our last meeting: essentially "Districts" layered in between Branches and the Central Board. The CB would continue with its current role of tax reporting, non-profit status assurances, accounting, and insurance while the remainder of business would be relegated to Districts, presumably, all else in the P&Ps: membership qual, e-business, dues, branch development, awards, and the rest.
  - Reasoning: This approach would put **all but the** corporate requirements in the hands of the Districts, essentially dividing the CWC in half; pushing down the collection of dues; the accounting for membership; adding additional level of accounting; each district establishing its own membership requirements, dues amounts, etc. This seems to add to the

bureaucracy, potentially dividing the club, and adds no value to the branches.

– Committee consensus 1/5 responding

The motion passed. Aye 16, Nay 0, Abstain 0

2) Allene Symons was appointed to the reorganization committee to replace Glenn Wood.

**Action: Dave LaRoche** will post the summary on the forum.

**Finance:** Kathy Urban inquired about the liability of the Central Board for branch contracts.

**Action: Dave LaRoche** will check the bylaws to see if a clause stating fiscal separation of state and branch organizations needs to be established.

### **Ad Hoc Committees**

**Centennial:** Donna McCrohan-Rosenthal summarized efforts to date and noted that the Web site has a newsroom link with press releases. Joyce Krieg displayed a poster she developed for display at Joaquin Miller Park which was presented in a ceremony on November 7, 2009.

**Action: Reps** are to ask their branches to send activity reports to Donna for centennial publicity.

Linda Brown introduced Stephanie Benavidez, Supervising Naturalist for the City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Department, who thanked CWC for contributions to Joaquin Miller Park.

**Motion:** by David George, second by Margie Yee Webb at 3:11 p.m.

I, David George, move that the CB reimburse Berkeley Branch for the \$25 membership fee in the Friends of Joaquin Miller Park, and that Linda Brown be designated the CWC representative.

The motion passed. Aye 16, Nay 0, Abstain 0

**Action: Reps who won prizes** in a drawing by Donna are to award them to branch members.

**Web Designer:** Kathy Urban reported that in order to request quotes from potential designers more information is needed about what CWC wants included in the project.

### **Old Business:**

**Unlimited Publishing:** Kate Farrell reported that branches have not informed her of members interested in submitting to the publishing project.

**Action: Reps** are to remind members of the opportunity and inform Kate of interest.

### **CWC History:**

Linda Brown is interested in developing a format for the history and proceeding with publication.

**Action: Reps** are to canvass members for volunteers to help Linda.

### **New Business:**

#### **Nominating Committee:**

**Action: Casey Wilson** will talk with individuals about filling the chair spot since no one volunteered.

#### **Westwinds editor:**

**Motion:** by Dave LaRoche, second Margie Yee Webb at 3:45 p.m.

I, Dave LaRoche, move that Kelly Harrison ([Kelly\\_harrison@yahoo.com](mailto:Kelly_harrison@yahoo.com)) of South Bay Branch, replace Igal Levy as the Managing Editor for the State Anthology: That South Bay Branch be the oversight branch; That Ms. Harrison report regularly on the CB forum and/or F2F meetings of her progress and:

— Be sent all pertinent materials including:

- Budget and expenses to date,
- Status of work done,
- Copies of submitted work both rejected and accepted,
- Contact information for assisting editors,
- And an indication of who has and has not been contacted relative to the receipt and/or acceptability of their work.

All as soon as possible and not later than Dec. 15.

— Be allowed access to the Central Board Forum through the duration of her work.

— Be included in CB events that might impinge on her work.

— Be recognized as the Managing Editor with early assistance from Igal Levy and henceforth

— Have full authority over all related to the collection, selection, assembly, design and publication of the anthology and be accountable to the CB for same.

The motion passed. Aye 16, Nay 0, Abstain 0

#### **Festival of Books:**

Allene Symons presented options for 2010 CWC presence.

**Motion:** by David George, second Joyce Krieg at 3:59 p.m.

I, David George, move that CWC again participate in the LA Times Festival of Books, 2010, that the CB provide \$650 toward the registration and booth fees and that the four branches who benefit most from new members pay the balance.

The motion passed. Aye 16, Nay 0, Abstain 0

Next CB meeting: March 14, 2010.

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Celeste, Central Board Secretary