

## **Minutes: March 16, 2011, Meeting of the CVEC Board and Staff**

### **Northfield Senior Center, Room 106**

**Member Absence: Judy Cederberg**

#### **Call to Order**

Board Chair Jane McWilliams called the meeting to order at 3:48 p.m. Before asking for "changes to the agenda," the Chair introduced the following individuals:

**Mike Harper** new CVEC Board member

**David Appleyard** committee member: redrafting of CVEC bylaws

**Molly Woehrlin** committee member: redrafting of CVEC bylaws

**Nate Haustein** River's Edge Digital Media

#### **Approval of Agenda**

With the introductions completed, the Chair asked for "changes to the published agenda." Hearing none from the Board and Staff, the Chair made one and noted another. Curriculum Director Jim McDonnell would speak first (not third) when the agenda calls for "Committee Reports." Furthermore, Board Secretary Jon Rondestvedt would give an update on the planning for the May annual meeting when the agenda calls for "Other." The Chair then called for a motion to approve. Motion to approve: Jerry Mohrig Second: Shirlee Madow Call for the Question: Unanimous approval.

#### **Approval of Board Meeting Minutes of February 16, 2011**

Before the Chair called for the approval of the minutes, the Board Secretary noted that--thanks to the eagle eyes of Board member Jerry Mohrig--the unwanted "s" at the end of the word "unstintings" had been removed prior to the start of the meeting. The Chair called for the motion to approve. Motion to approve: Susan Roosenraad Second: Pat Vincent Call for the Question: Unanimous approval. The "Approved Minutes" will be sent to the Executive Director for posting on the CVEC website.

#### **Presentation**

Note: Executive Director Ed Lufkin has been looking at various ways to make CVEC course offerings more readily accessible, particularly to those viewed as shut-ins, as having mobility issues, or as being distant learners. Consequently, he invited Nate Haustein to speak to the Board and Staff at today's meeting. Nate is the owner and production lead of River's Edge Digital Media, a company which produces portable media for repeated use and/or use beyond the point-of-production.

Nate opened by underscoring that digital media was a first-rate tool to "...expand to a greater audience," pointing out how CDs and CCTV have the potential

of making CVEC courses available to audiences beyond the various classrooms the organization now uses. At the same time, he also pointed out that these same courses could be sold--should the market merit it--to learning in retirement programs beyond Northfield. He illustrated this point by playing a brief video clip from "The Osher Distinguished Lecture Series" in which a program had been produced for mass marketing across the United States. He closed by briefly addressing a number of things to consider as the CVEC looks to expand its reach: selection of courses; production formatting and costs; market testing; distribution; etc.

The Board Chair first thanked Nate for his presentation and then indicated that the next step would be to take this information back to the Curriculum Committee for its review and further discussion.

### Committee Reports

**Curriculum: Jim McDonnell** Jim began by calling attention to the course registration numbers for our spring term offerings. Many are now "Closed" or nearly so. While this is heartening, setting course limits at 15 for certain classes--a practical consideration of room sizes and seating capacities--can be frustrating to CVEC members who are denied entry. He then moved to review the course offerings for the academic year 2011-2012. While "not set in stone," most fall and winter term courses have now been identified. Even so, Jim reminded Board and Staff that the Curriculum Committee always welcomes additional names of individuals who might wish to offer a course. In closing he turned to student evaluations of courses from our winter term. Jim found it "gratifying" to report that these evaluations expressed a "high degree of satisfaction" not only with the instructors but also in the fact that there was a variety of interesting courses from which to choose. These same evaluations also called for more courses in history (of all stripes), science, literature (again of all stripes), and current developments across the globe. He ended his report by emphasizing that there was a "hunger out there" for lifelong learning, a hunger that the "CVEC will do its best to satisfy."

**Bylaws: Molly Woehrlin** Before Molly provided an update, the Board Chair expressed appreciation for the Bylaws Committee "enormous service" to the CVEC, noting that the organization was "better off" as a result of their collective effort.

Molly began by again reminding the Board and Staff that the work of the committee was to produce a document that clearly distinguishes the "core governing principles" from the various policies that the organization had previously adopted. To accomplish this end, the committee not only drew "relevant segments" from the existing bylaws/policies of the CVEC but also drew upon bylaws from other non-profit organizations. She then turned to what committees the Bylaws Committee had identified as "standing committees" in the proposed revision, namely: Executive; Nominating; Finance. Other committees, she observed, while important and essential to the successful operation of an organization, can change over time and, therefore, are not seen as "core." This elicited an extensive and spirited discussion from several

Board and Staff members who believed the core listing should include the Curriculum Committee. Bylaws Committee member David Appleyard spoke at some length as to why the committee chose to identify the three it did, emphasizing that standing committees in bylaws are "structural" and not "content" related. Curriculum Director Jim McDonnell and Board member Jerry Mohrig voiced disagreements. Jim pointed out that our organization was unlike most other organizations in that our very purpose, our *raison d'etre*, was to provide educational opportunities. Clearly the Curriculum Committee must be added to the core. Jerry--while expressing an appreciation for the fine point of distinction being drawn by the Bylaws Committee--echoed Jim by underscoring that curriculum was at "the heart of what we do." In the interest of time, the Board Chair brought this discussion to a close and reminded everyone that the Bylaws Committee will accept additional suggestions as it continues to refine its revision for the April meeting. As a committee member, Molly will accept those suggestions, and David Halsor will circulate Molly's e-mail address to all Board and Staff.

*Curriculum Task Group: ReJean Schulte* ReJean directed the Board and Staff to the sheet she had prepared and distributed on which the task group's several goals were identified and the subsequent action steps which must be taken to implement them. She was especially pleased that the groups first goal--*Explore alternative course delivery systems in addition to current 8 week format*--was already being implemented or considered. She cited Richard Cantwell's course on opera, the upcoming lecture by Matt Rohn on Titian's Venice, and today's presentation on utilizing digital media formats. ReJean had also prepared and sent a second sheet which charted the goals and action steps but expanded upon them by identifying the responsible party(ies), the target time frames, and additional comments.

*Nominating: Teresa Ballentine* There was no formal presentation made to the Board and Staff at this meeting. The committee's recommendations for elections during the May 1st annual meeting had already been e-mailed to Board and Staff members. Three different elections are posited: Board membership; Board officers; Nominating Committee membership. The respective slates will appear in the spring newsletter to the organization well in advance of the annual meeting.

*Annual Meeting: Jane McWilliams* Rather than wait until the "Other" portion of the agenda, the Chair asked Jon to update the Board and Staff on his role in planning for the May 1st gathering of the Elder Collegium. Jon reiterated his intent to use gerber daisies for centerpieces as well as to utilize more fully the placemat to eliminate distributing several separate sheets of paper listing the agenda, nominations; financial reports, etc. He then pointed to the white board on which a sample formatting of the placemat had been drawn to illustrate how a single piece of paper could serve these several purposes at once. Furthermore, the "Pie Ladies of Trinity" had again agreed to provide the organization with delicious fruit pies for its meeting. Secretary's note: Rumor has it that several husbands find themselves active participants in the making

of these pies.

Jane then directed the Board and Staff to the handout on which proposed changes to the annual meeting format were listed. She first spoke on eliminating the featured speaker. Sensing that most members came to socialize and to learn of the fall term's course offerings, the committee proposed eliminating this traditional element. Jane added that no "knockout" recommendation had surfaced either at the committee meeting or through members' suggestions. Next she addressed what at last year's annual meeting proved to be nearly "self-destructive." Despite being asked by the Curriculum Director to limit comments to three minutes or less, instructors for the fall term routinely exceeded that time limitation. As a result, this portion of the annual meeting soldiered on for close to an hour. To pare the length of their remarks at this year's meeting, the committee recommended each instructor comment only on his/her motivation for offering the course. While well-intentioned, this recommendation was greeted with general skepticism by Board and Staff members. Most believed buzzers, lighted timers, or a very large hook could effectively serve to limit instructors' comments. No final determination was made. Jane then turned to a committee recommendation that would incorporate yet another something new into the format of the annual meeting. Entitled "table talk," this twenty minute portion at the outset would invite all CVEC members seated at their separate tables to consider important issues which directly concern the health and direction of the Elder Collegium. The exact question(s) for each table and how each table would deliver a precise summary of its work was set aside as time was running short. The business portion of the annual meeting was not discussed but would be part of the April meeting when a further refinement of the overall program will be presented for approval.

### Staff Reports

*Operations: David Halsor* Enrollment figures for the spring term are now in: 176. David indicated he was "pleased with how even enrollment is." Currently, six of the twelve courses are closed; the remaining six do have openings. All twelve will be offered. He closed by expressing his belief that enrollment figures across the curriculum attest to the "good variety" available to CVEC members.

*Executive Director: Ed Lufkin* At the outset Ed expressed Robbie Wigley's regret for being unable to attend today's meeting. He continued by reminding Board and Staff that specific website-related questions should now be sent directly to her and not him. Furthermore, he found her initial efforts in reshaping the CVEC website "dazzling."

*Finance: Barb Jenkins* Barb opened her brief report by acknowledging that one can, indeed, "learn alot from making mistakes." Apparently, her e-mail of the financial report to Board and Staff reached only Board member Chuck Carlin's "Inbox." Chuck was nonplussed, however, and reported that he was "flattered." Secretary's note:

Barb's financial report for March reached its intended audience prior to the start of today's meeting. Barb then pointed to the checking and savings account figures, saying we had reached a "high water mark." This is the direct result of income from tuition and fund-raising not offset with expenses (e.g. payment to spring term instructors). In response to Mike Harper's question of why the year 2009 appears several times in the lower segment entitled SAVINGS ACCOUNT, Barb indicated that her report tracks both the amounts and the exact date in which specific transfers of money took place in savings--beginning with 2009.

Stating she was "ready for supper," the Board Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon D. Rondestvedt, Board Secretary