

Tampa Bay Mensa ExComm Meeting held October 8, 2011 at home of Sylvia Zadorozny

Present: Thomas Thomas, Sylvia Zadorozny, Kathy Crum, Ronan Heffernan, Erica Rogers, Art Schwartz, Melissa Stephens

Absent: Dan Chesnut (excused) Barbara Loewe (excused)

Officer: Jay Johnson

Meeting called to order 4:08 pm by Thomas Thomas

Motion: To accept Minutes of August meeting as sent. SZ, 2nd ER, passed.

Reports:

Scribe: Appended.

LocSec:

TT: I have been keeping up with the paperwork. National is generating new reports for LocSecs. National needs to know when the last Minutes were submitted. They only consider Actions as printed in the newsletter so there is some communication there that needs to be clarified. We also have to send a paper *Sounding* directly. We are supposed to have a business meeting once a quarter and they are not seeing an ExComm meeting to be the same thing even though all our ExComm meetings are open to the membership. Other LocSecs are doing the same thing.

RH: Our by-laws require one meeting and a social meeting each quarter. We always notify Mel (RVC) of our meetings.

TT: We are up to 706 members now. Only 6 members switched from print to electronic and back to print last month.

Mel asked me to mentor a newly installed ExComm in Sumter County and in that process I discovered only part of Sumter counts as TBM because they go by zip codes, not counties. They are an active group, 19 members plus a few others in the rest of the county.

Treasurer:

KC: On the first page not a lot has changed from last month. Everything is on track. Our RG profit is up. We did not get any Contributions because we did not ask for any in Crewe List. On the Outflows, Office Supplies were big because of the stapler. We are under budget for Socials which means we have more money to spend. *Sounding* postage was significantly lower as well as printing for October issue as expected.

Discussion: Why we have a drop. Whether it will continue. Discounts. Printing fees.

KC: We have a profit so far this year. Banking Summary shows \$1000 was transferred to the 2nd-class mail account. I did a transfer in August so the post office account should be pretty healthy. Account Balances are due primarily to the RGH. Expenses from Sylvia and Ronan are included, but not a check for Erica's.

Discussion: Two signatories on the accounts, changing banks.

KC: The audit has been postponed until after October 15, but it will be done before the next ExComm.

Testing Coordinator:

TT: I sent 516 emails and got responses from 5. I had 3 people express interest for the 22nd, one for the 17th. We do get some responding from interest on TBM website rather than from National. One person expressed interest in events and clicked on our website instead of National's. The prevailing idea is that it is an impulse thing. If someone says they want to test and they don't test in a week, they won't. The information they get from National talks about prior evidence. The letter I sent prospects contains a lot of information.

Discussion: Supplies, coupons, specific dates.

TT: The LocSecs get another report on proctors, but it is a bit out of date. We have enough proctors, that is not the issue. The issue is scheduling, locations, and commitment from both the people who want to test and the proctors. Jay gives a test every other week whether anyone is interested or not, that way we can get someone right away. Other proctors want to be notified if someone in their area wants to test. That doesn't work because my experience is people don't look for something in their area as the primary reason to test. They don't mind travelling a reasonable distance.

Scholarship:

Theresa is not present and no report was received.

KC: I have not received the name or address of whom to send the Scholarship check to.

GCC:

Theresa is not present and no report was received.

Co-Coordinator of GCC:

MS: She did a Dig, but it is turning into just adults. Other than that we are keeping the same schedule with Bagels on the Beach.

TT: I didn't realize Bagels on the Beach was supposed to be a GCC event. It doesn't show that way on Calendar.

Discussion: Why wouldn't it be on Calendar? Separate mailing list. What about parents of kids? Is everyone getting on the list? Advertise "For kids' events contact..." point people to it. Why not just put it on Calendar? We have a lot of gifted children in TBM.

MS: People are concerned about having GCC events on Calendar because of the wrong people showing up. I think that is wrong. I would like to see GCC on the regular Calendar with a note. I think the list is only one of the reasons we are not seeing interest.

TT: Nothing we try to do passively will work. Putting it on Calendar and waiting for people to show up doesn't work.

SZ: Parents drive kids to an event and stay with them. If we don't have a group of kids to show up, others will not show up because there won't be anyone there.

TT: Older kids don't need parents there, but they do need a group.

RH: If it is exclusively for kids it shouldn't be on Calendar. Every event on Calendar is for every member.

Unless noted. Make that note. It's not a GCC event if everyone is allowed to come. There are people we don't want at a GCC event. Unless you have a reason to close it to all the other members, it is for all the members.

KC: Say "Kids-Friendly event", or "Kid's games will be played".

Discussion: list age limits. Then it eliminates too many people. We advertise for limits. An event for a specific group cannot go on Calendar. Gen-X went through this already.

Publicity:

ER: See report (appended).

Discussion: We are not non-profit; we are not-for-profit, which is different. MERF is non-profit. (Thomas explains tax category.)

Programs:

MS: We had a few out-and-about events. We went to Bok Towers and we have the Holocaust Museum coming up with a good response so far. We will have a tour and special docent. In November we have Sidewalk Chalk in Sarasota. It is listed on FaceBook, I will get it on Calendar.

TT: We have 311 members on FaceBook and I am seeing increased traffic there. I do encourage cases of special events that we use the "invite" function.

RH: I will make sure the Picnic is on "invite".

AS: I want to do a games weekend again. I think it was popular. Given where we are now, I think it will be after the first of the year. I like the last place but if the preference is something closer that is fine. Wherever we can get the greatest participation.

Calendar:

SZ: It is getting better, not quite smooth. There are questions about hidden events. Theresa thought something was on and I did not think it was. Can we find a way to identify if something is on? Melissa is putting her own stuff on as are others, so I don't delete anything. I add a listing as soon as I get it.

Discussion: How to manage the form, hidden stuff.

Editor:

RH: We had a \$40 savings per coupon. See report (appended).

TT: I want to go on record, the October *Sounding*, tsk-tsk.

Discussion: Responses to Editor's comments on an article.

TT: National has officially turned down a request for a Whites-Only SIG. The controversy is not just that, people acknowledge the reprehensible SIG, but that Mensa is taking a position, expressing an opinion by now allowing it. That is what people are objecting to.

Discussion: The costs of negative press. Who is talking about it.

Webmaster:

RH: I am revamping the website. See report (appended).

Membership:

ER: See report (appended).

Circulation:

AS: When I get the documents this month I think we can get it done.

Discussion: On-line forms, USPS website, credits and charge-backs on August *Sounding*.

Deputy LocSec:

SZ: I have not had any Deputy duties.

I got a note from Mel asking if I could help the Jacksonville group get started with a LDW, but I haven't heard anything else. I hope they will get things started.

Committee Reports:

Picnic:

RH: We have the shelter and are on budget.

Winter Social:

SZ: I need help with getting things done.

AS: I can help.

KC: I talked to Ruby and made the suggestion that at the Winter Social the chorale could do something, should the chorale get organized. The question of doing carols came up, or must it be non-religious things? Do we run the risk of offending someone?

Discussion: We are not taking a position, it is not a Mensa thing.

SZ: We don't have a location. We want to move around but since the picnic is in St. Pete we have to find a different location. I wonder if we should not do it in December, but in January and call it Winter.

Discussion: Timing of Social. Liquor? Should be a new-year party, not a New Year Party.

RG 2012:

TT: Theresa sent out a notice that she is having some trouble with the hotel and she wants to get copies of last year's contract so she can go back to them with what we had before. They said there was a foreclosure on that hotel and the new people won't rent rooms for less than \$98, and they won't allow us to get a block of rooms. The first person she talked to was excited, but she can't get to that person any longer. I think that if it turns out there will be an issue we will need to find a new location. I say that as a group. As far as whom Theresa has on her committee, I don't know, and I did not get a report.

AS: I would like to get ahead of the game this year and advertise.

Old Business:

Ruby Agnar's Chorale:

KC: She got her one-time only check. We said the Programs Officer was going to have discretionary funding for the non-home events.

Recruitment Day:

AS: Erica got me a contact, I will call. I struck out everywhere else. Schiller never got back to me. I will have a few contacts. I would like to do it in October, and if I can get it organized I will send out a call

for help. I would like to get whatever materials we have, brochures, and if we want to do testing at that time. If so, I will bring coupons.

Discussion: Jay can do the test if a place can be found that will be quiet for the test time. Erica can do a publicity.

Crewe List:

KC: I can help format.

JJ: I can do proofreading, I don't know how to format.

RH: It will all be from scratch, I am getting it all from National.

Discussion: They don't have a place for the personal paragraph. They have something for bios. We can solicit information. Link is on website. We can suggest people give us information they want to appear. People get upset when the information is not continued. People get upset when the information is continued. Cut-off date? If people want to change they can do it at any time. If we are going to cut stuff out, tell people. Ask if you want us to include last year's data. We have FaceBook to let them know.

Retreat:

TT: We haven't done anything. Sylvia, Melissa, Barbara and I are on the committee. Barbara has been out so let's set a date right now rather than waiting. We will check on sites for November 19, and see if there is an overnight.

By-Laws:

TT: That is Ronan and I, anyone else want to be on? We have the by-laws and need to update them to coincide with changes in National by-laws minimum requirements. With things such as electronic newsletters we now have options we didn't have before. We want to get things organized that will help ExComm such as absences. We want to define what is policy, what is by-laws, and what is judgment call. They have released some restrictions and therefore we don't need them either. One example is electronic elections; we have to decide what shape we want that to be.

RH: We have the new minimum standard by-laws that were approved in March, and they override our by-laws. We are required to harmonize with what they have. There is a checklist and we have to go through our by-laws to make sure we have everything they require and eliminate everything they don't. With the rewrite and ballot approval it will take us about 2 years to make a change and now that National has come out with the minimum standards we can get started.

New Business:

Policy for Speakers:

AS: I want to create a policy for speakers. I think the easiest way we can do that is give them an ad in *Sounding*. We had some speakers from outside who gave very good presentations and I would like to offer than something that would encourage them to come back again. It also might encourage others who might want to talk if they get an ad. If we can provide them with an incentive it might encourage them, we have room to spare and it won't cost us much.

Discussion: Ration on number of ads we have. Use a write-up instead, an article? Prioritize RG ads over paid ads. Let them use their own material. One time, not on-going. Put it in ahead so it gets them an in with community advertising. Non-members get a copy of that issue.

Motion: That we give people who speak or give a demonstration at an RG a half-page ad in *Sounding*, single issue. We will work to make sure it doesn't push us over the advertising limit. 2nd RH.

Discussion: Are we restricting it to RGs or including picnics and socials? Why not, it would help pace it out.

Amendment: To include other official events.

The Motion reads: That we give people who speak or who give a demonstration at an RG or other official event a half-page ad in *Sounding*, single issue. We will work to make sure it doesn't push us over the advertising limit.

Discussion: Theresa has information from last year's RG speakers. Are people asking for this? Way to get people to volunteer more. Free day at RG? Not done now. Free day is incentive for internals, not externals. An ad is better than a free day because it is more visible. Jay could interview them.

Vote: 6 for, one abstention, motion passed.

ER: We could use a Volunteer Coordinator.

Discussion: We need to bring in other people. Contact new people. Keep a list of who would like to speak. Create that job? Need a single point of contact. Set up database on computer? One contact person. Everyone gathers information, one person contacts.

Motion: that we appoint Erica as temporary Volunteer Coordinator. 2nd SZ.

Discussion: It is an understanding that we will all help. If you set up a database that will make it easier. Get their card, write down what they say on the back. Can we link it to Crewe List? We used to have that question: Would you like to be a speaker and what would you speak on? We got a lot of speakers that way. We can put the question in *Sounding*.

Vote: Passed unanimous. Erica Rogers is (temporary) Volunteer Coordinator.

RH: We'll work out the database, need security.

TT: No reason why we can't put a questionnaire for people to send in information. Since we are doing half online, I would like to see a hyperlink within the document that takes them to Crewe List.

New Business:

Changing election cycle:

AS: Changing the cycle so we don't have 2 meetings in June seems more efficient.

Discussion: We are limited by by-laws. What about term limits? Good concept, but do we get enough people to run? If no one is stepping up, can we make it work?

TT: This will take a long time, we can continue it. It might be workable to have term limits apply to the elected positions by ExComm which are LocSec, Deputy LocSec, and Treasurer. Having these term-limited means ExComm could choose someone new whenever it happens to be to give others a chance to step in.

Discussion: We always have the option to elect a new person. We do turn it over. It goes back and forth. It's not the option, it's to force someone else to take on the duty. The real killer is we don't want Kathy to not be Treasurer. It is a by-laws question, put it on that committee agenda, and let the committee know your thoughts. If we make it a rule of ExComm, or make it a rule we agree to, that we will not put that person in the third time. Make it a standing rule, not policy or by-law. It is still

binding. With us, we're ok, but we could get someone in for 20 years if we get a power-hog. Term limits ties our hands rather than helps us. No benefit. We don't have one person always running the show. We don't have acrimony or in-fighting. We don't have anything that looks like it needs to be fixed. Consider it now before it gets too hard to fix. Good for ExComm because brings in new ExComm members. Might be easier to work with if we had more active members. It is not necessarily true that once a person leaves ExComm they continue to work. We burn them out. Compromise: If there were enough candidates and if someone hit their term limit, they couldn't run again. You are trying to get people to step up. We proved that vacancies won't get people to step up. We have to advertise. If we didn't have write-ins no one would have noticed we had vacancies. We have to have something in by-laws of how to fill a vacancy. We run the risk of not having a quorum. Once you give people a sense of ownership by having them speak or work an event they feel that 'this is my group' rather than 'their group'. We could announce we have a vacancy; we need you to step up. We don't have to accept the person who steps up. Next time we have a vacancy don't fill it - announce it and have the election. We need a strategy now. Members of the AMC are given coaching of what is expected of them on that body. They have to sign a form. Losing someone and back-filling, membership won't even know about it. We can do special rules without by-laws, but we can't do ExComm changes without by-laws changes.

RH: It is already in by-laws that the ExComm will establish its own rules.

Excused or Unexcused:

TT: Dan said he wasn't going to be here. My feeling is that since he let me know in advance he met the spirit of the law and I am willing to excuse that absence. I did not hear from Barbara, I have not heard from her in the past 4 months. I am not willing to extend excused status to her.

Discussion: Shall we call her and ask her if she is still interested in serving? Do we replace her? Is there an election? Too early to discuss now. We should be recruiting for ExComm all the time.

SZ: I suggest that for by-laws, we get rid of excused and unexcused.

Discussion: Good because if it is for a real reason, it keeps the person on. They can be reappointed. Three absences is half the meetings. It is more passive. Saves debating. Takes too much time. Need to simplify it. It won't matter what the reason is. Make it 4 absences instead of 3. The point of the rule is to make sure we establish quorum. If we say we are not going to fill a position we put ourselves at risk at some point. Number of people on ExComm used to be 1:50 members, then the by-laws were changed to 9. Why do we need that many people since we have trouble getting that many people interested? Question now is should Barbara be unexcused and Dan excused? Barbara has medical issues, Dan had a scheduling problem. Barbara can still call in. She is getting *Sounding* and email, she probably knows about this discussion. The only criteria worth voting for would be cause, not notification. It won't matter if it is 3 in a row.

Motion: That Dan's absence be excused. 3 for, 3 against, 1 abstention. Dan's absence is excused.

Motion: That Barbara's absence should be excused. 4 for, 2 against, 1 abstention. Barbara's absence is excused.

The next meeting will be held Saturday, September 3, 3:00 pm, at home of Erica Rogers.

Motion: To adjourn, KC, 2nd ER. Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned -6:30 pm

Jay Johnson, Scribe

Proctor Report, October 8, 2011

I held 3 testing sessions in my home, and tested 2 prospects. Two others had indicated interest, but did not confirm and were no-shows.

I have testing sessions scheduled for every other Thursday and they are posted on the website.

Jay Johnson, Proctor

The two tested were: Jonathan French and Varisa Lall Dass

The two who asked for a date but did not confirm were: Derek Kelly and Kosta Nomikos

Publicity:

A press release was sent out to the major, and some minor, Tampa Bay newspapers. The draft outlined the Mensa Brilliant campaign, our local chapter, and local testing dates/areas. I'll start building a comprehensive PR database of media outlets for our next campaign. Our non-profit status should afford us expanded opportunities for free radio and/or TV announcements.

Membership:

For the month ending 08/31/11, we had 2 renewing, 2 move-ins, 3 new, and 1 reinstated member. I mailed welcome packets and contacted all but the two new members who had their e-mail and phone numbers withheld. I do not yet have information for the month ending 09/30/11.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica

Editor:

Everything is proceeding smoothly. With the new mostly-electronic policy the volume is lower, but we are only saving (IIRC) \$40 on printing, because our page count has dropped below some of OfficeDepot's volume-discount thresholds.

Webmaster:

I have made some minor improvements to the website, especially performance-wise. I am almost finished with a large update that should be, visually, almost indistinguishable from the old design (but large geekish changes under the hood). During all of this, I noticed that several pages are at least suspect, if not clearly out-of-date. I will work with appropriate officers to update those. The large changes can be previewed at tbm-staging.ronansan.com (it would be nice to have people examine that design with multiple browsers (incl. mobile browsers), to make sure that there are no surprises).

--ronan

Scribe Report, October 8, 2011

I sent the Minutes to each member prior to this meeting.

Actions of the last meeting were sent to Editor for inclusion in *Sounding*.

Minutes of the June ExComm Meeting as approved at the August ExComm were sent to Webmaster for inclusion on the website.

There were no further requests for Scribe.

Jay Johnson, Scribe