

ICELANDIC AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA (IAAMN)

Minutes from IAAMN Board Meeting held on

May 17, 2012, 7:30 p.m. at the Danish American Center in Minneapolis

PRESENT: Örn Böðvarsson, Chris Byron, Mallory Swanson, Joe Bowen, Baldur Steingrímsson, Harvey Thorleifson, Diane Greenwood, Claire Eckley, Lyle Hillmann (via Skype), Pall Skaftason

1. Claire called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. The first order of business was to approve the minutes of the last Board meeting, held on April 19, 2012.

MSP Harvey/Joe to approve minutes of April 19, 2012, Board meeting as read. Unanimous.

2. **Treasurer's report:** Örn gave the report on behalf of Doug. No transactions on the expense side since last meeting; The only transaction the revenue/deposit side was a deposit credit (resulting from a previous discrepancy) of \$15.00. The balance on our account is \$1,808.69.

MSP Chris/Harvey to approve treasurer's report. Unanimous

3. **Sunshine updates:**

(a) Pat Allred is at home and improving. She goes for dialysis 3 days a week and is doing much better; Her husband Gene, who had stents, is improving too.

4. **Correspondence updates:** None

5. **Election of Interim Vice President.** Claire informed the Board that there is currently one nominee for Interim Vice President – Mallory – and that this evening's Board meeting is the final opportunity for additional nominations. No additional nominees were offered, so Claire declared that nominations were closed and the Board was requested to approve the slate of candidates.

MSP Harvey/Joe to accept slate of candidates. Unanimous.

The result of this vote is that Mallory was elected Interim Vice President, to serve in that position till the next Annual Meeting, which will be held in November, at which time regular elections for a Vice President will be held.

6. **Use of Google website:** Claire reiterated to the Board that she wants everyone to be familiar with how to go to the Google website, how to post documents, etc. She asked the Board for input on the feasibility of scheduling an informational session for Board members. The following input was provided:

Diane: If you do webex (it was suggested that we ask Doug about this), people can call in and then we can we can do a demonstration online. She pointed out that a webex presentation might be more effective for everyone because the session can then be recorded;

Harvey: What do we really need with respect to posting of documents? If sharing documents by e-mail is sufficient for our needs, then why go to something like WebEx.

Claire thanked Board members for their input on this issue. It was agreed that Diane and Doug will partner to set up an online session on WebEx.

7. Update on execution of plan/goals for the Icelandic community (Harvey led discussion).

Harvey: I think we feel good about the two-page document that was presented at the last meeting. It gave us a picture of who we are and what we seek to do.

Harvey took the Board through a revision of the document presented last month and then asked for input from the Board.

Diane: We should distinguish between short term and long term plans;

Chris: This conversation helps me to realize that our two groups serve two purposes for the Icelandic community – the promotion of appreciation of Icelandic *heritage* (“what have I been given, making me what I am”) and Icelandic *culture* (“what am I doing that I’m passing on?”). I think there’s an awful lot of us that are in this because of those two words; we want to be able to identify who gave us what, how we used it, and where it’s going. I’d like to see those two words incorporated into the document developed by Harvey. Keep in mind we’re unique compared to many other clubs because centered in an urban area (most clubs in INL don’t get the opportunity to be geographically so proximate);

Diane: Let’s go back to the membership list. How many are active and how do they want to get involved? Keep in mind that our two clubs are very committed to Icelandic community outreach;

Baldur: The distinction between heritage and culture is not totally black and white. I consider myself an Icelander, but I’ve been in the States for 16 years;

Diane: culture and heritage are two cornerstones of our work;

Claire: One of the things we’ve been asked to support is the Bill Holm Library in Minneota (this should be added to the “special projects” component of the document). The Minneota Library is going to be moved into the big store, a building which is on the national historic register. The upstairs has the history, but the library will be expanded.

Chris: When we go for our 501c3 status, we will need an action plan and statement to be included in the document.

At that point, Claire asked that the discussion on this piece wrap up. Harvey thanked Board members for their input and said he will revise it using track changes and will send another draft out soon.

8. Snorri West Update: Joe reported that work is going well. Mallory updated that there are 3 participants (two young women and one young man) coming July 9 and we are in the planning stages for their arrivals. They will be in contact with distance relatives in the region that have emigrated since the 1950s. We have now asked Pat, Pam, Valgeir (in Hofsos) and Nelson Girard to check on other distant relatives that immigrated since 1874 that they’re not aware of and see if we can connect those relatives to the Snorri West delegates. Mallory also updated the Board that the Snorri West budget for MN is \$6,870.00, a smaller number because of lower headcount.

Claire updated the Board that Mallory and Joe have been working on Snorri West this this week and will be calling a meeting soon. All of the pre-planning is really helping Mallory and Joe because it's given them a framework to operate by. Doug has set up an account that he will oversee, so he can constantly report back to INL on Snorri West financial matters. Mallory will have a credit card and that's how she will pay for things.

10. INL convention report. Several Board members served as delegates at the INL Convention, held in Brandon, Manitoba, in April. Claire asked for those members who attended to provide brief reports to the Board:

Lyle: Harold Jonasson and his wife put on this entire annual meeting. Mrs. Jonasson made up the registration forum and took care of all the correspondence. It was a very good conference—about 170 delegates and about 350 people attended the gala banquet. Keynote speaker was Donald K. Johnson, a very well to do Canadian businessman. He's followed the Icelandic economic situation closely and 2 years ago he gave a talk at the INL conference in Toronto. He relayed that there is good economic news from Iceland; the economy has indeed turned around. The reason for Iceland's successful turnaround is that they were able to devalue the krona, and keep enough money in circulation. GDP is now at \$3.5 billion. They did *not* bail out the banks. Donald compared Iceland to Ireland; Ireland in EU and EU ordered Ireland to bail out the banks and they're not doing very well; In contrast, Iceland had the latitude to adjust their currency. Donald also talked about alternative currency arrangements being discussed in Iceland, e.g. adopting the Canadian currency, US dollar, Norwegian krona, or of course the Euro. Lyle talked for a few minutes as well about discussion at the convention regarding the "Fara Heim" project.

Chris: What impressed me was the caliber of some of the new faces, the new shakers. There were some very talented, appreciative young people. Pam Olafson Furstenau was elected the third VP, which was a great development for INL

The Board then discussed various issues relating to future INL conventions:

Harvey: What is the feasibility of IAAMN cooperating to host an INL Convention in the Twin Cities? How often have INL conventions been held in the USA?

Claire: The only USA conference was held in Minneapolis in 2002. However, the 2013 conference will be held in Seattle. INL leadership has already approached us about doing another conference in the Twin Cities. My response currently is that we cannot put on an economically feasible convention in the Twin Cities. The 2002 convention was feasible because of a fairly sizeable subsidy from the Icelandic government, which will be absent this next time around. We would need to do some serious fundraising this next time around. One way of keeping costs down while at the same time keeping the convention in Minnesota would be to look at sites such as Marshall and Duluth (INL has asked about these places as possible convention sites already).

The Board agreed to discuss the issue of a possible future INL convention in the Twin Cities further at a subsequent Board meeting.

11. Update on Icelandic film "Dreamland":

Harvey reported that we have the DVD and it's in North American format, but it would be good if we had a copy as a back-up (Board members were asked if anyone had a copy and no one said they did). Leah Peterson is our host at the Bell and both she and Harvey will be there at 1:00 p.m. Kata will join us there by 1:30 p.m. Harvey has conferred with Kata and Leah about logistics and the set-up of the program and it was suggested that Claire offer a few remarks. Dr. Arnar is bringing cheese and crackers and we need to ask people to bring other items as well. Just after 2, Leah will welcome everyone and talk about Bell programs. Harvey will speak for association, then introduce the film. Film is 90 minutes long. When the film concludes, Harvey will make a few closing brief remarks. Kata will then take over and will launch the Skype interview with the writer. After about 15 minutes of interaction on Skype, we'll have audience participation. By about 4:15, Kata will then conclude the interview and terminate the Skype session. At that point, Leah will say thanks from Bell perspective, then thanks from IAAMN perspective. Closing time at museum is 5, so refreshments served before then.

Claire: We need to say that the film was funded by Donald K. Johnson, along with INL of NA.

Harvey: Any efforts to promote attendance will be greatly appreciated. Please encourage people to attend!

12. Update on Meet and Greet events:

Our first Meet & Greet of the season is on May 27 at 7:00 p.m. There are going to be a number of Meets & Greets between now and end of Summer; Claire will send out calendar. They're in a different hotel this year. Jonas Thor has been invoiced for various expenses. We need to encourage people to join us and to bring salads and deserts. We also need to check with the hotel to make sure they have coffee. We cannot serve beer or wine, but if people want a drink they can go across the hallway and bring it back.

13. Family gathering update:

Claire relayed that Stony reported that he made a reservation for the first Sunday in May for this event, which will be held at the Danish American Center. Örn reported on behalf of Kata that the subsequent gathering will be held on June 10, where participants will go to a farm to look at baby sheep. Örn informed the Board that Kata had sent him a fairly detailed report on details of past and future gathering events and he will forward that to the Board along with these draft minutes.

14. Independence Day Picnic planning update:

Diane had some questions:

- (a) Who's bringing what. Claire confirmed that Doug is bringing meat. Table cloths, plates? Roaster pans? (Chris will bring one). Buns? (Doug will bring those). Condiments? Diane talked with Dorrie. Fixings for burgers (tomatoes, onions, lettuce) need to be brought. Need tongs and need serving platters. Take-home containers (those will be brought). Guestbook, donation container, and nametags? Coffee cups? Program? Entertainment? We need to resolve all these details.

- (b) Hekla Club meets Saturday and at least some of the issues in (a) will be resolved.

15. July soccer picnic update:

Claire confirmed that this event will be held on July 18, when the Snorri West people are here. We don't know yet which team from Iceland is coming (There's always at least one team). Schwan's will transport teams to and from accommodations to the park. The event will probably start around 4:00 p.m. and there will be a barbeque.

16. Speaker suggestions for LE Dinner and Thorrablot:

(a) Claire has asked Ron Goodman for suggestions. We are open to suggestions.

(b) Lyle suggested Donald K. Johnson.

17. There being no further business, a request was made to adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Next Board meeting: Thursday, June 21, at 7:30 p.m. in the Danish American Center. (Note: Örn will be overseas on June 21, thus an alternate note-taker is needed for this meeting).

Notes taken and respectfully submitted by Örn Böðvarsson