

MINUTES

American Quilt Study Group Board of Directors
February 9, 2025
Zoom

Board members present: Nancy Bavor, Susan J. Jerome, Sharon Pinka, Jodi Bratch, Joanna Dermenjian, A'donna Richardson, Colleen Pokorny, Kristin Barrus, Mary Fons

Not Present: Selina Toedter, Jodi Bratch, Millie Kehrli, Lisa Bouchard Hoe, Lisa Erlandson

Others: ED Carrie Dell, *Blanket Statement* editor Hallie Bond, *Uncoverings* editor Sharbreon Plummer

Nancy Bavor called the board meeting to order at 6:06 ET pm.

Nancy Bavor reminded us that there was a change made to the original minutes as requested by Deb Dahab. The minutes were revised on December 16, 2024.

Motion by Deb Dahab to accept the minutes for the December 1, 2024 minutes with submitted changes, seconded by Colleen Pokorny. Motion approved.

New Business

Financial Report: Kristin Barrus reported. The highlights of the report included that the budget proposal for 2025 is being worked on. The profits for Seminar 2024 are \$16,000 – these are no longer able to cover the operating expenses of AQSG. The rising costs of the in-person Seminar requires the organization to consider why and how Seminar is produced for the future.

There was discussion about the income areas available for AQSG. These include membership dues and internet programs as income sources. The Winter Seminar and Virtual Study Centers do make money due to lower costs. In 2024, they cost was \$4,000 and income \$20,000.

The Spring Appeal: Appeals seem to be more effective if focused on a particular project or need, for example for the support of more internet programs.

Meetings with the financial advisors are held two times a year. Meetings with the accountants as scheduled.

Community Agreement: The next step is to develop a process for what happens when the community agreement is undermined or ignored. There was discussion about this, for example, what constitutes inappropriate behavior? Discussion continued about the use of certain words.

Motion: by Tara Miller to approve the Community Agreement, seconded by Colleen Pokorny. Motion passed.

Board Survey: Deb Dahab reported – AQSG board needs new members. There was discussion about Mary Walters who has indicated an interest. 14 board members completed the board survey with the results that the board is “moving in the right direction” (Deb).

Nancy Bavor thanked Deb for her work on the survey as well as the Strategic Planning project.

Seminar Proposal 2027: Carrie Dell reported that there has been no proposal for Seminar 2027. And it is best to be planning 3 years out. She proposes that AQSG Seminar 2027 be held in Des Moines, Iowa. The positives include the competitively low cost, number of museums and places to go and see such as a living history museum, a quilt museum and the university, and entertainment and city activities. The dates available at the Hilton Des Moines downtown hotel are September 21 – 26 or September 28 to October 3 (2027). There was discussion and questions and answers.

Motion: by Tara Mille to approve Des Moines, Iowa as the site for the Seminar 2027 for September 28 – October 3, 2027 with the details to be worked out at a later date. Carrie Dell is authorized to sign a contract with the hotel with a \$40,000.00 minimum on food and beverage and the price of \$174.00 per room. Seconded by Mary Fons. Motion passed.

Other discussions about Seminars in the future: what about 2028? There may be a proposal for Minnesota. What about Austin, Texas? Las Vegas?

Is there a check list for proposals and what to consider when developing a proposal? Carrie Dell indicated that organization is easier with the internet, but there needs to be a pool of volunteers that are local to the site.

Motion: by Tara Miller to permanently close the physical office in Lincoln, Nebraska and allow staff to work remotely. Seconded by Colleen Pokorny. The motion was tabled until the next board meeting. Board members should think about this and submit thoughts to be addressed at the next board meeting.

There was much discussion about this. The important question asked was how does the staff feel about this? Carrie said she was neutral on the proposal. She pointed out that her apartment building has high speed internet and a conference room. She and Becky Fisher live close to each other.

AQSG would need to rent a post office box. What would happen to the physical archives and where would they be stored? It was noted that the Quilt Alliance stored archives in a storage area, but a storm caused damage there. What about storage for this kind of loss? Does AQSG have insurance for this? Can the archives be stored at the University of Nebraska Lincoln? What is the current lease agreement? Carrie Dell noted that the office is rented month to month at this time due to some changes in the building's ownership. AQSG may need to move in December 2025 Because of this change. The office may need to have the archives sorted, etc. for a move anyway. The savings would be about \$15,000 per year.

Discussion continued! It was noted that there is a lot happening this year in AQSG and moving would be a large endeavor. When does the decision have to be made? Looking at the bottom line, what is the benefit of having a physical office? This decision will affect staff the most. What can be done with the money that would be saved?

Carrie and Becky would have to have a designated cell phone. UNK may not want AQSG archives. What happens when staff changes? How will staff have a balance of work and life? Several people noted how a hybrid form of work or working from home functions for them – and it does depend on the individual.

Winter Virtual Seminar Report: Carrie Dell brought the board up to date with the financials for the February event. In 2025 the Seminar made about \$23,990.00. AQSG does pay to boost the event and it appears to be cost-effective.

Discussion: the Seminar, although online, is a great deal of work, especially for the staff. Would it be better to spread it out, and not try to replicate the in-person Seminar? Work smarter, not harder. Suggestions included spreading out the virtual programs across the months with a set calendar for the year. This proposal requires some more discussion and the input of members of the Showmakers Committee.

The issue about a study center brought up by the Seven-Know-It-Alls about vetting the research done by presenters was next discussed. The letter from the group brought up issues not only with a particular study center but with articles in *Blanket Statements* and *Uncoverings*. Basically, the process seems to work for the study centers and changes are going to be made to the form [and the format of programs] that should help determine the quality of each proposed program. These changes will include the need for a bibliography and the ability to fill out the form on a computer. Study Centers could become Study Workshops. Have evaluations for the Virtual study centers as well as the in-person ones. Carrie Dell will send these out.

Should there be a review committee for *Blanket Statements*?" There was some discussion about the definition of the role of editor for both AQSG publications. It was noted that *Blanket Statements* is a way to encourage members to share and can be a useful first step. Research is a living and breathing thing and when new research comes along it's okay to challenge and be challenged.

Lots of discussion. In the end, it was decided that changes needed to be considered deeply and if needed, thoughtfully implemented. This is part of the larger Strategic Planning initiative.

Nancy Bavor shared a story about funding for the Strategic Plan project.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:04 pm ET.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Jerome
February 26, 2025