

**PANAMA CANAL SOCIETY, INC.
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
HEADQUARTERS OFFICE, SEMINOLE, FLORIDA
JUNE 13, 2009**

Present: Tom Wilder, Margaret McLaughlin, Tom Spence, Jim Parthenais, Shirley Avery, Pam Reid, Bliss Connerton, Bob Russell, Jim O'Donnell, Bill McLaughlin, Chris Wilder, Cheryl Russell, and Nancy Van Sicen. Also present was Betty LeDoux-Morris, Past President and Hotel Lodging Chairperson.

Absent: Mike Coffey and Jacque Vowell.

The president called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. Tom Wilder introduced Bliss Connerton, Director at Large. Bliss was a conference call from Texas. She thanked Tom for appointing her to the position and looks forward to working with the board. Bliss is a graduate of BHS/80.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of April Board Minutes - Bob Russell made a motion to approve the Board Minutes from the April meeting; Margaret McLaughlin seconded it. Motion carried.

Approval of Expenditures – Tom Spence made a motion to approve the expenditures from April 17, 2009 to June 12, 2009 in the amount of \$27,593.84; it was seconded by Shirley Avery. Motion carried.

Approval of New Applicants – Week of June 8, 2009 – List #2 - Bliss Connerton made a motion to approve the 17 new applicants; Jim Parthenais seconded it. Motion carried.

President: Tom Wilder
Old Business –

Logo Trademark Protection – Tom reported that he has requested Betty LeDoux-Morris to look into the protection of our logo trademark since she has handles this before. The cost would be approximately \$500.00. This item was tabled until a later date.

Vendor Request – Skyline Real Estate – Panama - Tom reported that Mike Coffey was checking into this Real Estate Company before giving approval to be a vendor. Being that there wasn't much time before the reunion, Tom asked Nancy to prepare a letter to them advising them that it was to late to attend the reunion this year.

1st Vice President: Margaret McLaughlin

Margaret suggested that we prepare a flyer to be given out at registration in the format that Tom used in his March message in the *Canal Record* about frequently asked questions. Margaret feels that this might stop some of the negative comments. Pam Reid made a motion to have the copies made; Tom Spence seconded it. Motion carried.

2nd Vice President: Tom Spence

Tom reported that registration is on track and he and Cecilia would be ready to go at the reunion.

Treasurer: Jim Parthenais

Jim highlighted the April and May Financial Statements, which stand for audit. He also gave each board member a copy of the financials for the reunion (copy attached to minutes). He explained that we have kept our costs down this year. He asked that if anyone had any expenses for the reunion to please let him know today. Tom Wilder said that he would have about a \$100.00 charge for the silk screen for the give-away bags. Bill McLaughlin said that there would be a couple hundred dollars for gift certificates for the hotel staff. Bob Russell made a motion to approve these expenditures; Tom Spence seconded it. Motion carried.

Jim submitted his listing of mini-reunions for the reunion and he and Mike Coffee have their volunteers for ticket sales and that all shifts are covered.

Director: Shirley Avery

Shirley reported that she would have her son and husband volunteering for the Disco dance.

Director: Pam Reid

Pam reported that she is having a hard time recruiting volunteers to sell lottery tickets at the reunion. Betty LeDoux-Morris said she would be willing to volunteer and that Pam should send her an email and let her know what time was open. The main concern for Pam is that she has to leave the reunion on Saturday by 3:30 p.m. and that she also needed to change her departure date at the hotel to Saturday.

Pam had some questions that really don't pertain to the reunion, but she feels that we need to follow up on them.

. One item was about the organ transplant information that she does not know the status of that at this point. Chris explained that he is working on a special link for things like this, but takes some time to set up. Another question was the talk we have had about email blasts. It was explained that at this time it is a non-functional field in the membership database, but this is also something that is a work in progress. We would need a programmer, which would be very expensive at this time. Tom would like to have Chris continue at the pace we are at now, but he hopes to have this done before the new board is elected in 2010. Tom also explained that it takes a lot of work behind the scenes.

. Pam reported that she has been collecting board games to be placed in the clubhouse during the reunion.

. At the beginning of the term in 2009, Pam suggested that we have a "casino night" and family night dance at the reunion. Tom said that at the August board meeting this could be discussed.

. Pam said that she has heard from different members that there was not enough signage at the reunion. The information is posted on the TV's in each room. Pam says that the signs should say this is how you get to the clubhouse, dances, etc. Bill explained that we have to place the signage using the guidelines of the hotel and are all approved by the hotel. The map is enlarged and placed on the bulletin board in the convention center. Bill explained that signage is a very high maintenance project and for the past few years have placed the signage in the storage room and those responsible for each event can pick them up in the storage room and return them. Margaret suggested that Pam look around this year at the reunion and if she sees an area in need of a sign, she could let the board know at the board meeting following the reunion. Betty stated that at any property we have to follow the guidelines of that property, and nothing can be placed in the lobby area, and any area that is not carpeted.

. Pam mentioned that at the reunion last year regarding the issues with Shorty and Slim, and the sound; she wanted to know how many years those people have been in charge of the sound system. Bill explained that it has been since we have been at Rosen Shingle Creek and it has already been addressed to the hotel. Paul Homb, with Keyboard Specialists has provided an exact list of equipment that is required during the dances and it has been given to the AV people at the hotel. Pam feels that with all the negativity with Shorty and Slim, and since it was the fault of the hotel sound system, we should consider bringing them back.

. She also has some ideas on how to increase membership. Tom suggested that this be brought up at the August board meeting.

. Pam said that since we made so many phone calls at the office, maybe we should consider getting a "magic jack". She has one at home and it works great. Tom said that we have talked about it before, but we will need to do some more research on the matter.

. Pam wanted to know if we were doing a survey this year. For the last two years we have not received many responses, therefore, it was decided that the cost out weighed the need. Pam wanted to know if she could sit at the Lottery table and poll members about the Casino night and the family dance night. Casino night would involve the members paying a fee to enter the room. Pam will research this and provide information at the August board meeting.

Past President: Bob Russell

Bob Russell reported that he has arranged for the Sarasota Luncheon in 2010. The date will be May 1, 2010. Tom reported that he had received a comment from one of the members at Sarasota that he really appreciated the Society holding the luncheon in that area. Tom feels that even if we only get one

comment like that it, it is worth having the travelling meetings to the different areas of the state.

In regards to the Cultural Seminars, he has been working with Barbara Marshall from the Panama Canal Museum. Bob will check on the liability insurance with the Lowery Zoo. He has also arranged for a special plaque to be presented to Mr. Smith by Tom Wilder and Joe Wood at the seminar. Bob has purchased the plaque and donated the cost. Lori Snow will be providing some nice door prizes for the seminars. Two posters will be made for the seminars, one with the golden frog and the other advertising the Write of Passage at no cost to the Society. The seminar on the Write of Passage will have eight or nine speakers.

Bob has made arrangements for 1,000 Magic Cards delivered to the hotel so they can be given out at registration for our members.

Bob reported that he has heard back from Michael Smith with a tentative reply for the 2010 reunion for the Annual Luncheon.

Editor: Jacque Vowell

In the absence of Jacque Vowell, Nancy reported that Roberts Printing has advised us that the back of the *Canal Record*, where we place the mailing address, has been changed by the post office. To be in compliance with the postal system the back cover will be changed for the next addition of the *Canal Record*.

Office Manager/Secretary: Nancy Van Siclen

Nancy reported that as of today we have 3,263 current members.

Reunion Material – Each chairperson was asked to take their supplies today and those that require a money bank (registration, dance ticket sales, lottery, and disco sales) please see Nancy at the Information desk. Please return supplies to the office at the August board meeting.

Membership Contest – Nancy reported that we have two winners for the membership contest. Colette (Foster) Carlisle had six new members join and Maureen (Ferguson) Lewis had 20 new members join. Maureen will receive the two free regular room nights at Rosen Shingle Creek Resort.

Legislative Representative: Jim O'Donnell

Jim O'Donnell highlighted the June Legislative Report. Copy attached to minutes.

At this point, the meeting broke for a short recess and reconvened at 11:00 a.m.

Bylaws Chairperson/Reunion Coordinator: Bill McLaughlin

Reunion – Bill reported on the following for the reunion:

- . The tickets and name badges have been completed and are in the hands of Tom Spence.

- . The last two items that need to be printed are the Annual Luncheon program and the flyer with the schedule of events and map outlining the location of the different events during the reunion.

- . The event plan was emailed to everyone and he hopes this is final. He will email it to the hotel sometime next week. He asked that everyone look at it again and email him any changes before he sends it to the hotel.

- . He would like to get with Chris about the projectors after the meeting today and Tom will bring a second one.

- . Bill reminded Tom that he does not have access to the easel for the flip chart this year for the SWOT exercise at the Annual Meeting. Tom will borrow one and bring to the reunion.

- . Bill has the membership contest and Write of Passage certificates completed.

- . Bill reported that after Pam brought up the subject of having free sodas at the pool party, he asked Betty to check with the hotel since she was going over for a meeting. Bill asked that Betty report on this.

Betty reported that she checked with the hotel about covering the sodas at the pool party. The hotel cannot donate them and we would run into a few snags as far as the expense of the soda idea goes. We cannot do anything on a table around the pool like we will have the kegs on unless we would allow them to buy bottles. One of the things that came up was to put a cap on the amount of sodas sold at the bar. If we would have a cap of \$200.00 we would be getting about 55 sodas in 12 ounce cups. For 139 sodas there would be a \$500.00 cap. Betty said that Tom mentioned, the other day, about some lemonade. Betty talked to the hotel about the welcome punch, which is in our contract, which is served during the heavy registration hours. It was suggested that we could have the punch served at the pool instead. The hotel was in agreement, with no cost to the Society. It would be self-serve and when the punch is gone – it's gone.

A suggestion was made to have a small sign made up that the pool party was sponsored by Vacation Quarters. The hotel will provide a DJ from 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. for the pool party. The DJ will provide games, school rivalry challenges, and class challenges.

Betty will check with the hotel on the signs and the lemonade table.

Tom Wilder showed the bag that will be giving to all those that registered for the reunion (one bag per registered envelope) and the pen for each of the volunteers at the reunion.

Hotel Lodging Chairperson: Betty LeDoux-Morris

Betty reported that there was an issue with the room block. The original room block was for 3,548 room nights. We did an addendum in February 2007, which reduced the room block down to 3,096. In the contract we have two gateways the first in February 2009, which reduced the rooms by 15%, and in May 2009 we took an additional 10% reduction. We basically have reduced the room night by 727 from the original contract but we still had to fill 2,369 room nights. Because of those gateways we have to fill the 2,369 room nights or we would have to pay for any shortfalls. The good news is that we have reached that quota. Currently, we are at 2,595 room nights. The only concern is that we are still receiving cancellations, but the flip side of that is that we still have reservations coming in. We don't know what the final number will be until almost the end of the reunion, but we will have a better idea the Monday of the reunion. At the present time we are 226 room nights over what we needed to have, so we have avoided having to pay for any shortfall. When we were first looking at this in May, we were looking at about a \$42,000.00 payment we would have had to pay the hotel.

The other issue is the comp room nights and the bad news with regards to that, at this point, is that we don't have enough room nights booked to reinstate those comp room nights. We are a little bit short having to take both reductions. But we should be okay, since we have some staff room allotments. If we did not have to take the two reductions, we would be 28 room nights short.

A few items for the board's information: We have several people who book the rooms outside of our block. In the addendum we provided that we would be allowed to pull the names of those we recognize and those room nights are credited to our block. Betty reported that basically Nancy and she spend the entire day on Monday going thru the list comparing names to our membership listing. Betty reminded the board that if they know of people that do book outside our room block it could result in some serious consequences to the society. Because we have had to reduce the block by 727 room nights, the hotel lowers the price of the rooms and tries to fill the rooms that we released. Betty reported that there is nothing we can do. She did ask the hotel, so that we are not compromised this year and next year, to do it in such a way that Wednesday thru Sunday, are not included in this reduction.

Tom also mentioned that by the members booking the hotel rooms through the Society, we get the convention space at no cost to us. This way we don't have to pay for the convention space. We could most likely get room rates of \$65.00 per night, but it would cost us to book the Convention Center for the space we need for all of the events.

Betty also reminded the board that the VIP lounge is for only those people staying in your hotel room. Betty said that last year we had some people giving

their key to the VIP lounge to other people who were not in their room, and this is not acceptable with the hotel.

Betty also asked that if someone has a special request of where they would like to be placed in the hotel, to please give her this information today before you leave, and she will do her best to get you placed where you would like. She doesn't do this for everyone, but she does do it for class reunions or family reunions that has requested to be near one another. Also, if you need an early arrival, please advise her.

For your information, Betty also told the board that the hospitality suites are assigned to the older ones at the beginning of the hallways, and also the amount of nights they are reserving the room for.

She also said that if any of the board members know of someone having a problem pertaining to their room, to please contact her so she can get it corrected right away. She would like to correct the problem as soon as possible, rather than wait until someone says something on Saturday afternoon when the problem could have been taken care of in the beginning.

Tom wanted to say publicly to Betty and Bill that it is a fantastic job they both do. Anyone who is not involved has no idea of the workload involved in coordinating the reunion.

Tom Spence said that he would email Shirley Avery and Pam Reid his list of volunteers and maybe they can get someone from his list to volunteer for Disco or Despedida Lottery Ticket Sales.

After discussion, it was decided to shut down the website for Reunion Registration on Wednesday, June 17, 2009.

Bill suggested that everyone observe what is going on at the reunion and then submit their After Action Report after the reunion while it is fresh in their minds.

Tom went over the Annual Business Meeting agenda and the SWOT exercise. Tom will also have a handout that the members can follow along while he is presenting his president's message. Randy Drake, CPA will talk about the audit and financial summary. When we get into the SWOT exercise Tom will highlight the 2007 SWOT exercise points and then go into the 2009 SWOT exercise. Mike Coffey has agreed to help with the SWOT at the Annual Meeting. We will have, on the screen, what the board did on the SWOT exercise a few months ago and then Tom will ask the membership for enhancements to what we have thought of. Obviously, this will not be for the August board meeting but sometime later in the year, we will put them together and use them to help this board and the incoming new board next year with some ideas.

Chaplain: Cheryl Russell

Cheryl reported that as of today we have 321 members and guests signed up for the Annual Luncheon.

Cheryl reported that two Roosevelt Medals are being auctioned off at the silent auction for the Museum.

Sgt at Arms: Chris Wilder

Chris reported that the movie for the Owl Show would be an old black and white Dracula movie.

Chris explained that the computer that Nancy uses is being backup in two places – one online through the website and one backup on her hard drive. The cost is \$69.99.

Good of the Order:

Tom reminded the board that the next general membership meeting would be July 3rd at the Annual Reunion at Rosen Shingle Creek Resort.

The next board meeting would be held on August 22, 2009 starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Society office.

Bob Russell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m.; Margaret McLaughlin seconded it. Motion carried.

NANCY VAN SICLEN
OFFICE MANAGER/SECRETARY

TOM WILDER
PRESIDENT