

Volunteer Council Meeting Minutes

18 March 2015

Attendees: Virginia Flavin, Michele Sutton, Marta Horgan, Liz Diament, Heidi Hinish, Deirdre Palmer, Dianne Stephens, Lynn Russell, Cathy Ryan, Katy Senkus, Susan Lewis, Patricia Mattimore, Nancy Keefe, Katherine Gottschalk, Maria Amelia Ramaciotti, Marina Bradfield, Dianne Maffia

Lynn Russell's Report

1. The Gallery has purchased "The Jolly Flatboatmen" by George Caleb Bingham. This has not been publically announced and should not be shared with visitors.
2. The floors have been laid in the two new East Building tower galleries with the re-opening of the EB scheduled for fall (Oct/Nov) 2016.
3. Corcoran Collection Update:
 - The Gallery has accessioned over 4,000 works of art from the Corcoran collection with the expectation that more will be accessioned over the summer - primarily works on paper and photographs. This on-going effort is considerable given that there were 17,600 works in the Corcoran collection.
 - Works not accessioned into the NGA collection will be dispersed elsewhere with first priority being given to other art institutions in Washington, DC but the procedures for that process have not been established.

- In the long run, the merging of the Corcoran's American Art collection into the Gallery's, offers a larger picture of what American painting is all about. It seems fitting that in 1907 the noted art critic, Leila Mechlin wrote an article expressing the opinion that had an national art gallery existed in 1869 (at the founding of the Corcoran Gallery) Mr. Corcoran's collection could have, appropriately been part of it.
- There is no firm time table for re-opening of the Corcoran building. It requires extensive interior and exterior work which George Washington University is responsible for completing. Eventually the Gallery will have most of the 2nd floor which will be used for special exhibitions of modern and contemporary art. In addition, there will be a Corcoran legacy gallery.

4. *In the Making: A PopUp Studio* offered in February was a great success and enjoyed by visitors both young and older.

Committee Updates

1. APD

- The meeting with Dianne Stephens and Liz Diament was very useful. They discussed a variety of issues of particular interest to docents including the new structure of the Education Division, changes in staffing and how dialogic tours like *East Building Dialogues* and *Artists Choices and Why They Matter* fit into our menu of tours. Interactive methods are encouraged for all of our tours.
- The tour schedule for 2015 has been expanded to include additional tours each week.

- The coordination of adult tours with school tours, staff talks and special request tours is mostly working but not always. Everyone needs to remember to keep one and other apprised of what the other is doing especially so the adult docents can work their tours around the rest. School docents did say that school tours often run at least 15 minutes if not 30 minutes late.

2. APW

- There have been no coordination problems with other weekend tours and programs.
- Some docents are still working out Volgistics issues.
- Some docents are working on being validated for the *Artist Choices* tour so it can be offered on weekends.

3. FLD

- Asked staff to make sure that information be shared equally to all adult docent groups.
- Their process to select new co-chairs is proceeding fairly smoothly although the prospect of having to chair the Volunteer Council for the 2015/16 term is a potential problem.

4. MD/DC School Docents

- Merger of the two groups has worked very well

5. VA School Docents

- Katy Senkus is the new Chair

6. Art Information

- Twenty-three new candidates are starting training

Staff Updates

1. The survey process and feedback for the *East Building Dialogues* tour was successful and informative. Work on an assessment for the *WB Highlights* tour is proceeding as is exploration with Paula Lynn of other ways of obtaining feedback and evaluation.

2. The volunteer lounge work is almost done. Still to come are new lockers and visuals for the wall. Staff will check on Wi-Fi availability as it doesn't bleed through from the Founders Room.

3. For the first time in 8 years, the school docent program will be recruiting for new school docents with training beginning in the fall of 2016. How to announce the program is being looked at very carefully as many of the social media options available today were not available 8 years ago. Current school docents will be involved in the process from the beginning.

4. Current tour schedule has been expanded. The percentage of visitors taking tours is not great and the reasons for that and ways of increasing numbers are being explored. New signage is under development.

New Business

1. Council Officer rotation was discussed. The pre-set rotation among the various volunteer groups may no longer be working.

2. The Chair for the 2015/16 term is supposed to be the FLD chair. But potential incoming FLD co-chairs don't want to take this on at the

same time as they are becoming first time chairs of the FLD and having never attended a Council meeting.

3. It was discussed having the MD/DC School Docents switch roles with the FLD (they are slated to be the Secretary of the Council in 2015/16) as they were supposed to Chair the Council for 2014/15 but didn't as it was the first year of their merger into one group.

4. But the MD/DC group is still not anxious to become Council Chair and the FLD group really doesn't want to become Secretary for the same reasons that they don't want to be Chair.

5. AI volunteered to continue serving as Council secretary next year.

6. Liz Diament suggested that for the purposes of Council leadership only, the adult docent groups merge and the school docent groups merge, thus increasing the pool of potential Council leaders.

6. Cathy Ryan (VA School Docents) and Michele Sutton (AI) volunteered to explore options and come back to the Council.

