

NCCNA Board Meeting Summary for August 4, 2009, held at The Chateau on Capitol Avenue in Sacramento.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS

- To adopt the board meeting policy.

DETAILS

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 PM

Present were Bev Anderson, Penni Smith, Wayne Hewlett and Cas Sammanasu. Mike Green called in from Monterey. With these five, a quorum existed. Karen Polastri, Laura Niznik, and Amy Considine had other commitments. There was a brief time of catching up with activity.

Penni explained that she had overwritten her notes from the last meeting. She has received notes from Bev and Wayne, and will be putting them into minutes within the next few days. Therefore, since they did not yet exist, September's minutes could not be approved.

Bev asked if there were any questions about the president's report. Penni asked that she clarify who the "we" refers to.

Bev related that she had an extensive conversation with Doug Olsen at TNA. Doug handles marketing and development for them. She felt that Doug had a better grasp of the situation with us. He agreed to contact Bev before sending the newsletter out to our group leaders (the newsletter comes out three times a year). Bev will supply him with an updated list of who to send the newsletter to. He mentioned that they need to have a person dedicated to support groups, and Bev told him that actually they needed someone for various regions throughout the US.

Penni gave the treasurer's report. The bank balance is \$23,547.04. Uncleared items total \$822.63, making the actual balance \$22,724.41. Support group reserves, included in that balance, are \$8,102.31. Therefore, the total in the NCCNA general fund is \$14,622.10. She noted she has a handful of bills to pay in the next couple of days.

She also gave an update on the July fundraising campaign results:

Contribution	6,044.50
Dues 2009 General	1,170.00 (78 new members!)
Dues 2010 General	1,380.00 (46 of them also paying for the next year)
TOTAL RECEIPTS	8,594.50

The costs of the campaign (printing, handling, postage) totaled \$2,079.81, making the net receipts \$6,514.69. This does not include the matching contribution from Origin. 252 people responded out of 2,739 letters mailed, giving us an incredible 9% response rate. (That does not include those who responded by asking to be removed from the mailing list.) Penni says she considers it a very successful campaign.

Bev will e-mail Origin to find out what they need for documentation and hopes they will respond shortly.

Penni said it would be good if we had a matching sponsor for the November campaign. Bev passed out the flyer for the October 20 event, and asked that everyone attend if possible.

Penni said that as far as she is concerned, the financial transition is complete. Everything is in MAMA, the budget data is out, and now it is just ongoing business.

Penni asked if anyone had questions about the budget. Mike had a few. He noted that Dick had budgeted only \$2,000 for the rebates, and we have spent almost \$4,800. He wondered how Dick was so off. Penni noted that the third and fourth quarter rebates from 2008, which totaled about \$2,800, were actually paid in January or February (Dick received the report on 1/23), but Dick entered them in his program with a date of December 1. He may have already considered them paid when he created this version of the budget. (Earlier ones do have a greater amount listed for rebates.)

Mike also asked what the \$4,800 budget for professional services was for, and why it hadn't been used. Penni explained that we had considered using a different accounting firm than CAC, likely getting more services and costing more, and \$1,800 was budgeted for that. The other \$3,000 was for any sort of service we might use, such as secretarial help or video editing. Penni noted that Diane's service for laying out the newsletter could fall under that category, and perhaps some of that budget amount should get credited for the newsletter. Essentially, however, we have not actually used the services we thought we would.

He also asked what the video production was (this was not in Dick's budget). Penni said she created that category to classify our expenses for making and distributing videos, and it has a budget for the months ahead because she expects to finally get to her editing. It does not include the public service announcements, which were put under advertising and promotion.

Mike noted that we are way over-budget on our expenses. Penni pointed out that we have had more income than expected, and that the overall projection was that we would be only \$500 over-budget at end-of-year.

We turned to a review of the Strategic Planning Day (SPD). Bev has three people from the board and three from the SPD who have agreed to participate on the strategic plan committee. She would like to recruit six people from groups further out who did not come to the SPD. The first meeting will likely to be at end of October, as several people are traveling at the moment.

The California State University, Sacramento, Center for Small Business contacted Bev. Dick had worked with them last year to see if they could help us through their management assistance program. They met with Dick and gathered some information, then issued a report that we found not-so-useful. Though they usually work with a business for a year, they told Bev they would like to work with us again. She asked if anyone from the board would like to go with her to the meeting (yet to be scheduled). Wayne agreed to do so, then Cas mentioned how he did that on the student side when he was getting his business degree. We thought it would be helpful to have him involved as well.

Penni reported that we now have 839 members, 35 more than last month.

Penni noted that the diabetic letter has finally gone to the mailer. Penni explained to Cas and Wayne that it had taken some time to decide what areas we wanted to include in the mailing, and we nailed it down only a couple weeks before she became ill, and it became subject to the great delay she's still trying to recover from. She also explained that we have no idea what to

expect from this mailing. These are people who presumably have no knowledge of us, and may have no knowledge of neuropathy at all. We have a good letter, but it's going out totally cold. The emphasis is on membership. We need about 85 members to break even on the mailing. That's a very doable 2.5% response rate from 3,281 letters.

Penni also noted that the fall letter will go out at the end of the month. She will be sending it around for comments shortly.

Bev brought up the board meeting policy. No one had responded with any additional changes beyond the ones she proposed. M/S/C to adopt the policy.

We discussed Cas's ideas regarding all material that gets sent around for review. Mike mentioned that in other organization's he has been involved with, he would receive a board packet 7-10 days prior to a board meeting that had everything needed for the meeting in it. He finds it difficult to gather everything together when the items have been sent at various times throughout the month. In contrast, Cas thinks we should get things as soon as possible so that we have maximum time to review. He would also like us to have deadlines for a response, and that everyone actually should respond. Wayne spoke of version control programs used on his job where a document is checked out from a central source and no one else can update it. He expressed a desire to have a single copy of a document stored on the web, to which everyone would post their comments. Cas also liked that idea. Penni questioned how any sort of source control could be implemented when, unlike a business, we aren't dealing central server under our control. She also said she could not take on the task of coordinating document posting. Wayne agreed that we might not have version control, but we could still have the central posting. He also said that he was just tossing out the idea for us to consider for the future.

It was agreed that there would be no changes in how the docs would be issued for now, except that we will try to get documents out for review as quickly as possible, and try, as much as we can, to send out items for the board meeting no sooner than a week in advance (president's report and agenda excepted). If we do that, we might be able to accommodate Mike's desire for a packet.

Penni spoke a little about the standing rules revision and new membership policy that will need to reviewed within the next month for possible approval next meeting. She explained that the standing rules are each considered its own item. Some of them do not need any changes, but others do. She has gone through them all and will send them out with suggested revisions in red, and her comments in blue. She said anyone should respond with additional suggestions. There are some items she didn't suggest any changes to that others may think need changing. Some may need further consideration.

She also explained that many of the existing standing rules pertained to membership, and it seemed to make sense to pull those items out of the standing rules and draft a membership policy, so that is also being submitted for review.

Turning to items to review, Penni passed around sample professional brochures for review. She explained that when we sent the neurologist mailing, we invited them to become professional members, but that was not the primary focus of the mailing—which was mainly outreach and education—and we only received one such membership. She explained that she and Bev were discussing how we might get additional members and Bev said we ought to invite anyone who spoke at a meeting to become one. These are people who have already helped us by coming to a meeting, and they usually have some service they offer, such as podiatry,

chiropractic care, acupuncture, yoga, and many such things. It would be nice if we had some sort invitation we could give them at the end of the meeting. Thus the idea of having a professional membership brochure was born. Bev drafted some text, and Penni used it and her own ideas to develop a couple samples.

Both of the samples were the same on five of the six sections. The inside left section was the difference. On one, it had background information about neuropathy. On the other, it had some suggestions about how else the person could help the NCCNA. That had been what Bev had on her draft, but Penni wondered if that was making too many assumptions about the person's interest in the organization.

Penni asked that everyone review the brochures and make any suggested revisions to the content or design. Just about everything is up for change. She also said we need to decide how we would like to print it. Full color is probably unnecessary. Would we like to go with colored text on a white background, like our regular brochure? If so, what color? Or would we like to stick with the black text, but have it on a colored paper? This also needs to be decided. The only thing is that it should not be the same as the general membership brochure.

Cas said that perhaps a hybrid of the two inside sections would work: one paragraph to explain about PN, and the rest to tell how to help.

Penni will e-mail the brochure to everyone and let them comment. She will incorporate Cas's suggestion into a third sample before doing so.

Bev talked about stationery. She mentioned that we really have no need to have printed letterhead. We have letterhead in both black and white and color in a Word document that can be used and printed as needed. Penni said she had graphics of the logo and text in all manner of arrangements, and apologized for not yet sending them to the new board members. She will do so soon. Everyone therefore agreed that there is no need for printed letterhead. Bev would like to have printed envelopes, however, as she feels that looks much more professional than stamps or labels. Again, everyone agreed. We also agreed that a black and white envelope would be fine, even if the letter inside was on the colored letterhead.

One of the other issues concerns support groups using the letterhead. Some of the support groups have adapted the logo in some way for their group letterhead. Some have very poor letterhead design. All would need a way to put their own contact information on a letterhead. We don't want any communication from a group to look like it came from the board. Penni said she would like to play with creating a simple design the groups could use, and everyone agreed.

Bev also brought up the need for a regional policy. She explained that she has some people she thinks could be developed into regional coordinators, but she doesn't want to start on that until we have some guidelines in place about how we will handle regions. She decided that we wouldn't have a discussion about it tonight, but did want us to start thinking about the topic. She did pass out a list of how she thought the support groups would be grouped. Penni noted that Lincoln was not on the list. Penni mentioned the draft policy Bev had sent out the previous month, and Bev said we should think about it more in terms of discussion points. Penni said she had a couple of concerns about the region idea. She said that given how difficult it can be to get and keep group leaders, she wondered how we would be able to get sixteen regional coordinators, and wasn't sure we should implement the idea if it can only be done in a couple places. The idea we've discussed is that the regional coordinators handle the group contact and development, and serve as the interface between the board and the groups. She

questioned whether this plan would really accomplish that. She also asked whether Bev thought the regional coordinators would also lead support groups. Bev said some of them might. Penni said she was afraid that would be too much to ask of people.

We concluded by turning our attention to the group rebate question. Noting that so many people were not at this meeting and that this is a critical decision, Penni said she would prefer to delay the vote to next month. She is concerned that the issue be decided before the renewals for next year start pouring in, but that if we decide at the November 3 meeting, that would be fine. Any changes agreed upon could be implemented in the system very quickly. We spent some time discussing points of the various ideas that have been presented regarding the rebates and group financing.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.