

Westconn International Trade Association
Wednesday, May 11, 2016
Water's Edge at Giovanni's, Darien, CT

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Attendees: George Woods, President; Ed Carey, Vice-President; Sam Fischel, Treasurer; Mark Bishop, Acting Secretary; Lucy Ambrosino, Past President; Directors: Sandy Kohler, Cathy Power, Gail Kedrus
Committee Chairs: Renee Blackmon (Membership).

President, George Woods, called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Past President's meeting – Lucy Ambrosino recapped Past Presidents meeting held on Tuesday, April 26, at Columbus Park Trattoria in Stamford. Attendees: Lucy, George Woods, Mark Bishop, Trish Hantin, Al Gordon, Chuck Vento, Robert Restrepo. Lucy led discussion on how to attract more people to the meetings and thereby grow the membership. It was pointed out that the untapped value of Westconn is the experience of our members – most of whom are veterans in the import / export business and have a world of knowledge to share. One idea presented, which seems worthy of more consideration, was to create a question and answer forum on the Westconn website where members could post questions or challenges they are facing on the job and get answers from members who are experts in that specific area, or who have themselves faced the same problem and found a solution.

One other idea was to include, as part of the meeting announcements, personal testimonies of long time members on how they have benefitted from their membership and association with Westconn. Overall, it was a very productive meeting with input from everyone in attendance.

Secretary's report – Acting Secretary, Mark Bishop, distributed minutes from the April 19 Board of Directors meeting. The minutes were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's report – Mark distributed Treasurer's report dated May 11, 2016.

Opening Balance from April 19	\$10,538.78
Education Fund	3,080.61
Receipts	330.00
Disbursements	889.75
Ending Balance	\$9,979.03
Education Fund	\$3,093.61

Mark commented that this ending balance is approx. \$3,000 lower and Education Fund is approx. \$1500 lower than May 2015, but that the association's finances are still in sound condition.

Membership – Mark distributed updated Paid Member roster. Current paid members total 46, including new member, Ryan Dooley from Yang Ming (America). Renee mentioned that she had personally reached out to some people and she was expecting about 10 former members to renew their memberships in the upcoming year.

George also commented that he sees a positive trend related to meeting attendance for the upcoming Fall meetings (Sept & Nov). People he had contacted confirmed our prospective programs were of interest and that they would make an effort to attend.

Program - George Woods confirmed tonight's speakers: Lindsey Shellman and Phil Villapiano from Odyssey Int'l.

George confirmed Judy Carney from Network Brokers has agreed to speak at the Sept meeting on the subject of ACE. Cathy Powers confirmed she had met with Mark Sa from INTTRA and recommended him as a presenter at the November meeting. She gave George a copy of their presentation. She also said Bill from her company, Diageo, would also be willing to speak.

Reception – Gail Kedrus reported 32 reservations for tonight's meeting.

Legislative – Ed Carey mentioned that he heard the U.S. Coast Guard has announced they will not get involved with enforcing SOLAS regulations. George said he has three handouts for the reception table on what companies can do to meet SOLAS regulations.

New Business: The date of Thursday, June 2, was set for the Old Board / New Board meeting to be held at Water's Edge at Giovanni's. Time: 6:30PM.

Matt Guasco appeared in person and volunteered to serve as a Director on the Board. He will have to be approved by a vote of the current Board at the New Board/Old Board meeting.

6:00PM - Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Bishop