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Gulf Coast Writers Association

Executive Board Minutes 3/15/2022

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM by President Irene Smith. Members present at the Fairfield Inn in person were Irene, David Aiken, Mike Cole, Andrew Conlyn , Jan Nieman, Christie Zarria and Claudia Geagan. Geneva Kelly, Judy Loose, Carol Kennedy and Mary Charles were present by Zoom.

Minutes of the Febuary meeting were approved.

Treasurer’s report: Michael reported February revenues of $513.72 and expenses of $236. Of the $408.50 collected, $300 came from writing contest entry fees. New member fees amounted to $87, and renewals generated $145. The February speaker waived her fee. Mike proposed moving the bank account from Truist with its poor customer service to Suncoast with free business checking. Expenses included $100 for the Loose Links website and $120 for the Word of Life Church meeting venue. Jan moved and Christie seconded approval of the minutes.

Communications report: Geneva will join “Meetup” for GCWA. She hopes that “likes” and “shares” will be easier to initiate than with Facebook. Christie asked about the status of contest judging and Geneva reported that all the submissions had been read, with winners to be informed by the end of March. There was discussion about the same entrants being judged 1-2-3. Carol suggested limiting contestants to one entry per category, and Mike pointed out that it would result in fewer entries. It was also expressed that the Fiction and Creative Non-fiction genres need to be better defined for contest purposes. This is a discussion that will need to continue.

Reading Festival report: DJ Kristoff sold 12 to 15 copies of her book, and other members sold 2 to 3 each. Christie remarked that the spaces were small, especially with as many as 6 people occupying the tent. The GCWA space was next to the Books A Million tent, and restrooms were on the opposite side of the event. FWA had a booth with a few books. The GCWA booth attracted a few people interested in joining. It was suggested that in future GCWA purchase a larger booth and develop an activity to attract visitors. With so many local authors at the festival, Christie proposed including more local authors as presenters at GCWA meetings. It was noted that DL Havlin and Janelle were there beginning at 7 AM and supported the GCWA table throughout.

Critique Group report: Efforts to connect David with “that little man” have so far been unsuccessful.

Membership report: David reported 19 new members, 8 renewals who paid dues and three first timers. Irene suggested that more and younger members might be attracted via Zoom, and Judy reported at least one new membership as a result of the Reading Festival.

Jan, on resigning her duties, noted how GCWA has been a great part of her life and that losing her words has become a challenge. Irene heard a motion to adjourn at 6:26.

Mary Charles, Secretary