

Minutes

ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE TUCSON BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 16, 2018

12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Open meeting – all AFT members were invited

AGENDA

1. Call to order; attendance – Rebecca

Meeting called to order at 12:46.

Attending:

Rebecca McSwain (President)
Ralph Morales (Vice President)
Laurie Prill (Treasurer)
Carol Schaedler (Secretary)
Mary Carryer (Member-at-Large)
Yael Smadja (Member-at-Large)
Bernard Stefanek (Member-at-Large)
Gaëlle Merialdo-Torrenti (Executive Director)

2. Approve/modify current agenda - Rebecca

No changes, although a budget discussion was scheduled for next meeting.

3. Approve minutes of December 2017 annual meeting?

This has already been done via email among the people on the board in December 2017.

4. AFT Board expectations - Rebecca

Rebecca distributed one handout about general board responsibilities and one that contained a template for planning and executing events.

In the general handout, there was a list of the events that the Board of Directors (BOD) have traditionally undertaken during the year:

Carol worked on the Galette des Rois.

Rebecca and Mary will do the Festival of Books. A new board person should do it, too, for continuity's sake. Bernard volunteered.

Ralph will do the Beaujolais Nouveau.

Yael's travel schedule will preclude signing up for a specific event. She is willing to be back-up to or assist other people who have signed up for an event or do a potluck.

Mary will help Yael with potlucks.

Other events will be assigned as the year goes on.

Keys/Binders

Gaëlle distributed keys and alarm information. (Persist with using the keys — they can

be difficult.)

If you want a binder, let Rebecca know. (Bernard, Ralph, and Yael want one for sure.)

5. New board administrative needs - Mary

Mary had updated information that we are required to post. Actually, the information is in a binder behind Gaëlle's desk. (A sign is posted to that effect.)

Brief overview of by-laws

By-laws can only be amended at annual meetings. Bring up any concerns. Most of the by-laws can be changed because they were specifically written by AFT. Some cannot — they are required by the Federation of Alliances Françaises USA to which we belong.

Mary will send Rebecca which ones are ours v. which ones are required by the Federation of Alliances Françaises USA.

Conflict of Interest statements

As per the by-laws, all board members, employees, and volunteers must sign a confidentiality/conflict of interest agreement. All Board members and Gaëlle signed and turned these in. They are kept in the binder behind Gaëlle's desk.

6. Administrative, education, and membership report – Gaëlle

For winter session (Jan/Feb), there are 9 classes running.

Total registrations: 65 (plus 4 more possible)

Cancellations (due to lack of enrollment):

3 adult classes

the 2 classes for kids (the age 6-10 class and the “Maman ou Papa et moi” class)
the beginners class at the JCC

January events:

“Americans in Paris” presentation (Sat, Jan 13)

Galette des Rois (Sat, Jan 13) [about 36 attended; \$115-120 net profit]

Events to come:

Poetry Club (Fri, Jan 19) — This has not been well attended so may be discontinued

Workshops:

French for Travelers (Sat, Feb 3; Sat, Mar 3; Sat, Mar 31) [Nicole]

Grammar (Fri, Feb 2; Fri, Feb 16) [Gaëlle]

Teachers training (Sat, Feb 10) [Phoenix]

Cooking classes

Fri, Jan 19 — cancelled due to teacher injury

Fri, Mar 2 — TBD

Presentations

Date TBD, French civilization [Sylvain]

Date TBD, French philosophy [Isabelle]

Next session: Mar/Apr with new teachers

News:

Kiwiversity software: Free, already simplifying tasks, very satisfying

Teachers:

Continuing— Christine, Gaëlle, Liz, Marie-France, Olivier

New— Nicole, Kate (this session); Isabelle, Patricia (later session)

Items for possible discussion:

Presentation price structure— free for members, \$5 non-members?

Calculation of membership year— one year from end of month that person joined

Reactions to report:

Currently, we require 4 students for a class to run. Yael would like to see the minimum enrollment to be 3 students. There is concern that we lose students that have enrolled when we have to cancel a class due to lack of enrollment. Gaëlle says we can sometimes put students elsewhere. For the kids' classes, even 4 enrolled would not break even. The reason is that siblings get discounts, teachers get paid more for kids' classes. Several board members would really like to see kids' classes. We may want to postpone this discussion until we have the budget worked out. Ralph suggested possibly reducing the number of sessions for the kids class to get parents hooked at a lower price. [Current curriculum was designed by the Federation of Alliances Françaises USA, but we may be able to divide the sessions in half.]. We wondered how many re-funds were given due to classes not running.

Two questions:

1) Should we change the minimum enrollment for the adult classes? Currently at 4, change to 3? Discuss at next meeting. Consider allowing director to make decisions at his/her discretion. Consider that if we change to 3, and someone cancels/drops out, two students may not be cost effective. However, "early bird discounts" have encouraged people to sign up and commit.

2) How do we get a kids class going?

Consider splitting the 10-12 week curriculum

Revamp advertising (Bernard will help with info distribution)

Remove prices from advertising and highlight our non-profit status

To consider: We have to factor in a continuing class. (After 6 weeks, some kids will want to go on, while there would be new kids for a new 6 week session).

For presentations, Gaëlle suggests making them free for members, \$5 for non-members. More free things for members will encourage people to become members. General agreement. Mary mentioned what members currently receive with membership: weekly conversation class, access to library, movies (when we had them), monthly book club, discounts on classes, and currently, the poetry group.

Ralph brought up having more presentations in all French. General agreement, but historically very low attendance in those presentations.

Yael suggested that we concentrate on providing high quality presentations that people are willing to pay for. Concern: There is a substantial amount of work to register people and collect the fees. New idea: Have a donation bucket. No need to register but ask for an RSVP on the advertising. Announce at the presentation that these talks can only continue "with support from viewers like you."

7. Finances – Laurie

Review and discuss as necessary

QuickBooks is being used. Upgrades are possible.

Treasurer would like for us to go to quarterly reports (she will keep monthly totals but report quarterly). Fiscal quarters will be used (e.g., Jan 1 - March 31). [However, as the bylaws require monthly reports to the board; it was subsequently agreed that a monthly financial update would be required. It will include income and expenses for the month as

well as year-to-date (similar to the horizontal page in the prior financial package) along with the current bank balance.]

FYI, treasurer will do the work once a month, not “as it comes in.”

Concerns: We are in the red by more than 5% (for the year).

2018 budget will be discussed at next BOD meeting.

8. Events update – Board members

Debrief Galette des Rois event (Keep/Consider)

Festival of Books - Rebecca/Mary: Bernard will join Rebecca and Mary in planning for this event (see above)

Jewish Film Festival update: The AFT table for the French movie it is sponsoring on Wednesday, January 17, will be staffed by Mary, Rosann, and Carol

JCC Cooking class: The January class was cancelled due to teacher injury

9. New Business:

Session length times and price policy- Yael

Yael brought up the idea that people be able to sign up for more classes at one time (“multi-pack” or “bulk” rates); or perhaps, buy a certain number of sessions and punch them as used (e.g., Happy Hour). This could help with missed classes. (Yael will write up a formal proposal.) Mary mentioned a missed class policy that she has experience with: If you miss a class, go to a different class. (AFT has a class make-up policy).

Ralph: Have AFT business cards that could be distributed easily. A question was asked if we could use the bookmarks we already have instead. Rebecca will put something together along the lines of a business card and bring it to next meeting.

Yael: Consider and develop sponsorship possibilities (French restaurant, Raytheon, schools, etc.)

Treasurer overlap: policy needed? - Carol. Most felt that this step was not needed.

10. Set next meeting?

Meeting adjourned at 2:01 pm. Unaddressed agenda items will be dealt with by email if possible.

Submitted by,
Carol Schaedler