

Camp Quest NorthWest meeting minutes

Round Table Pizza (15730 1st Ave S, Burien, WA)

Wednesday, July 8, 2015, 6:00pm

Board Members in attendance:

President – Chuck Wolber

Vice President/Acting Treasurer – Brennon Chruch

Secretary – Jami Blackann

Members at Large – Becky Friedman, Natalie Bornfleth, Bridget Lombardo, Michael Warbington, Gordon Schryer

Others in attendance: Sharon Zolnowsky, Paul Mopps, Chauni Porter, Colleen Michele, Brian Demong

Action Items:

- * Brennon: Follow up with ACA and Mary about vaccination requirements.
- * Michael: Follow up with Mary about CQNW participating in the 2017 Leadership Conference.
- * Chuck: Contact the Secular Policy Institute and tell them to remove CQNW from the website.
- * Chuck: Post our policy about radio silence during camp.
- * Chuck: Add to organizational chart for 2016: Finding a mental health specialist for camp.
- * Brennon and Gordon: Pay Curt Moose Jackson for use of the Hip Pocket Activities Booklet.

Meeting Minutes:

Start time: 7:00pm

* Chuck moved to accept the June 9 minutes without a public reading. Bridget seconded. The Board accepted the minutes unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

- * Contact Brennon for details.

Vaccination Requirement:

- * In general, there's consensus on the Board to require vaccinations.
- * Becky suggests adopting something similar to the ACA policy. We don't want to exclude campers who have an allergy that makes them unable to get a particular vaccine.
- * Talk to Mary at CQ Inc. about how they're handling this situation. Brennon will follow up.
- * What list of vaccinations should be required?

Raising Tuition Rates:

- * Does CQNW want to raise camper tuition or keep it the same? What are our reasons either way?
- * We could have payment different tiers to choose from.

* One question to ask: Why should we do this? We don't currently need the money this year, for example, to stay in the black.

* Pros of raising tuition: Increase money we have in the bank for emergency purposes, or make an investment for the future. Improve the value of camp. More money for camperships. Stay competitive with other premium camps.

* Cautions of raising tuition: It's important to assess the specific reasons to raise tuition. Parents will want to know why. If the organization has more money, will we still look for frugal ways to spend it?

* Table discussion for September.

Leadership Conference in 2017:

* Will likely be held on the West Coast. Do we want to co-host with CQ National?

* What would be our responsibility? Find and partner with a hotel. Find reasonable rates. Rides, room shares, etc.

* Brennon: Host it at the Oregon camp?

* This would be a good leadership opportunity. Involve our volunteers.

* Consensus is that the Board would like to participate and will continue talking about it.

* Michael will follow up with Mary.

Secular Policy Institute:

* Becky brings to our attention: An organization called the Secular Policy Institute has listed myriad organizations as "coalition partners" without ever asking the boards of directors. CQNW is listed on it, and Becky believes it's in our interest to request removal. The executive director of SPI has filed suit against CQ's Exec. Director Amanda Metskas.

* The Board decided not to be listed on this website. Please take CQNW off the website.

* Vote: Chuck moved that we request CQNW to be removed from the Secular Policy Institute's website. Michael seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

* Chuck: Contact the Secular Policy Institute and tell them to remove CQNW from the website.

* Vote: Michael moved that any future associations with other organizations must be approved by the CQNW Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Printer:

* Gordon: The software for the badge printer must be licensed on the computer it's used on. It would be useful to have a computer that belongs to camp.

* Chuck would prefer not to maintain a camp laptop, which was echoed by several other Board members. It's a lot of work to maintain a computer, even if it gets used infrequently.

* Consensus: Let's investigate other options and bring back to the Board if it doesn't work.

Posting Photos and Updates During Camp:

- * Gordon: Do we revisit the issue of radio silence during camp?
- * The Board has discussed this topic at length during previous Board meetings, and there was continued agreement about the radio silence policy.
- * CQNW doesn't want to open the door for parents to try to control the camper experience.
- * Gordon requests that we have a clear, visible policy about this going forward.
- * Chuck: Post our policy about radio silence during camp. Robert Ray has a great response that we can quote.
- * Bigger Discussion: Becky points out that it's hard to find the Board's previous decisions about the organization's policies. Many of our policies and Board decisions are buried in years of meeting minutes, which makes it difficult for new volunteers and Board members to access quickly. At some point in the future, it would help to document all of these policies in an easy-to-find place. In the Bylaws, on a webpage.

Submitting Changes to Programs Before WA Camp:

- * It's in a shared Google document. Write comments and modifications in the document.

Oregon Recap:

- * Some of the Negative Comments:

Interpersonal issues; need more training dealing with special conditions; hard time sleeping; cultivating empathy with people who have different beliefs without making fun of the person; behavioral problems; need more coverage during pods; better preparedness for weather changes, extreme heat

- * Some of the Positive Comments:

Support when interpersonal issues were discussed; cabins were delightful; campers helping campers; positive interactions with campers; campfire discussions; seeing campers challenge themselves and have fun; good community; love the staff

- * There may be need for a behavioral specialist, and/or additional training for staff. We have a nurse; it may be beneficial to have a mental health professional as well. Place high emphasis on volunteer training and finding a professional. Chuck would like to add this to the organizational chart for 2016.

- * At least 80% of staff, going forward, need to have completed the online video training. This will be a requirement to stay licensed.

- * Staff and Camper Feedback: Brennon wants to know if we should post this to Google Docs for the Board, even though some of these comments have names in them. There's a question about protecting camper privacy. One solution: generalize the comments, don't use names. Send staff comments verbatim.

Brennon's Comments:

- * Rethink the slide show so it's faster. Don't want photographer ousted from campfire every night while the photographer is processing photos. WA photographer needs to understand the expectations, coordinate with Gordon. We don't need to necessarily change anything; Brennon just wanted to bring this up for discussion.

- * Issue with program on first day: Problems with stereotypes.

* Espionage game: Rethink it (not for WA). Make it positive (no subtracting points). There was feedback from staff and campers who were harassed constantly about not having a badge.

* We could also just make it a rule instead of a game. Lots of discussion about different options – everyone should think about it, and we’ll make a decision later. Could limit the pool to cabins or pods.

Mike’s Feedback:

Scheduling and staff assignments:

* The change to the afternoon A & B block planning worked well and I believe we should continue this in Washington. Specifically, we assigned specific staff members to lead clearly defined activities during that block of time. Those staff members then handed off those activities to other staff returning from their breaks. One possible future improvement is to make plans for who is handing off which activity to whom.

* Along those lines, I found that it is better to over-assign people to particular activities and assignments in advance rather than to under-assign them and rely on assigning people on the fly.

Printed Materials:

* I think that the smaller sized “Camp Guidebook” worked well, and I saw many people referring to it regularly throughout the day. I would appreciate additional feedback from staff but I think that this will be the size and format that we use for this information going forward.

* I think that I will include a signature page at the end of the staff “Technical Manual” for staff to complete after they have been handed out but prior to camper arrival. I would appreciate any feedback on this or any suggestions for additions to the staff rules and expectations

Vote: Chuck moved that we pay Curt Moose Jackson for use of the Hip Pocket Activities Booklet. Gordon seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Other:

* I think that having an “arts and board games” alternative to the Thursday night dance was ideal, as it allowed people to go back and forth between the dance and the other activities. It also meant that people not attending the dance were able to have some social interaction rather than disconnecting by watching a film. I strongly recommend eliminating the film in Washington and explore the possibility of finding a nearby location for arts & crafts and board games.

Next Board Meeting:

Wednesday, July 29, 2015 at 6:00pm

Location: Round Table Pizza (15730 1st Ave S, Burien, WA)

End time: 9:30 pm