

Dec. 12, 2018

LDEI Board meeting

Called to order at 6:40 p.m.

Attending: Joan Donatelle, Merrilyn Tauscher, Emily Paul, Liz Nerud, Audrey Nelson, Andi Bidwell, Barb Strand, Paula Zuhlsdorf, Janice Cole, Kim Ode

The secretary's minutes were approved.

In new business, Emily Paul presented a working proposal that would offer some form of financial scholarships to prospective members who may find current dues to be a hardship. Current dues to the Minnesota chapter and international LDEI are \$175.

She described several options ranging from a full scholarship on an annually-reviewed basis to partial scholarship to a payment plan. The goal is to lower a barrier that potentially is deterring potential members who could increase the depth and breadth of our current membership, which tips mostly toward older, often retired, women. She stressed, however, that financial hardship could be experienced among all ages, races, job categories, etc.

"Think of equity as the goal," she said, noting that this option could appeal to women in culinary fields for whom discretionary income currently is scarce, but who could enhance our membership from programmatic, social and demographic perspectives.

Emily proposed increasing Membership Committee expenses in the annual budget by \$575, noting that the likelihood of using all the money under such a program would be quite low.

Board members raised several questions regarding how recipients would be chosen, concerns over the transparency/privacy of the process, and whether it would be appropriate to set some expectations of chapter participation among recipients.

All agreed that more discussion is needed and that Merrilyn, as treasurer, needs time to study the logistics of the payment plan option. Emily said she will gladly field questions via email (Emily@thegoodacre.org)

The board agreed to take up the issue at the next board meeting in February. If the scholarships are approved, money could then be allocated to the budget.

In new business,

Cindy Jurgensen offered new member candidates for a vote. They are Beth Rosendal, a foodstylist and recipe tester nominated by Betsy Nelson; Marge Porter, a cheese specialist and sales representative at Great Ciao, nominated by Liz Nerud, and Sara Johannes, chef instructor at St. Paul College, nominated by Nikki Erpelding.

All were accepted.

Further discussion, however, focused on revising the nomination form to better reflect how candidates meet the bylaws' criteria for membership, as well as stressing to nominators the need to submit thoughtful, detailed and, ideally, electronic forms.

Cindy said the Membership Committee will take up this task.

The treasurer's report was approved.

In further old business, Audrey said she'd been asked what is covered by our chapter insurance, in connection with fundraisers. Les Dames chapters' insurance is through the national group, with additional contributions by each chapter on a per member basis. Noted in passing: Bouncy castles are frowned upon.

In further new business, Audrey reported on the recent quarterly international phone conversation among chapter presidents. The subject was fundraisers and she shared our considerable success with Dame It! and fielded questions from chapters seeking to raise money.

She also wants to raise our profile in the quarterly magazine by submitting "member milestones" when warranted. A note in an upcoming newsletter will ask members to keep this in mind, and to toot their own horns for the good of the chapter. The newsletter item will include the specific criteria for submissions.

In committee reports:

Program: The Jan. 16 meeting will tour the new Keg & Case complex in St. Paul with a meal at In Bloom. The \$75 cost will be partly subsidized for members, who will pay \$40 (plus extra for beverages, desserts, taxes and tips.)

Scholarship: Andi Bidwell and Paula Zuhlsdorf have been updating the address list to send info to schools and superintendents and will send a call for applications in January. They also caught up with our two recent scholarship winners for an article in the December newsletter.

Microgrants: Applicants are being sought; deadline is Feb. 11. The board also clarified the position of the microgrant coordinators in the world of committees, deciding that each year's past-president/advisor will oversee this work, negating the need for an additional committee chairperson.

Service: B.J. Carpenter and Diane Jackson continue to work in depth with Urban Roots, and report that the program has now added beekeeping.

Fundraising: Barb reported that the American Federation of Chefs is holding a conference in Minneapolis in late March and, in reaching out to Les Dames for tour suggestions, learned of the Dame It! event and intend to buy a block of tickets for its attendees.

Newsletter: Kim reported that everything is going well, and that photos are always welcome from various events.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by Kim Ode
Acting in Kristin's absence.

