

SHCG Board Minutes

May 19, 2026

Present: Tamela Wells (Pres.) Connie Brown (V Pres.), Robert Milnes (Sec.), Mark Traub (Treas.), Tom Bailey (Exec. Dir.), Amy Brandenburg, Katherine Caldwell, Lee Entrekin. Absent: Rodney Leftwich, Blair White

Meeting called to order at 10:14am

Approval of agenda: Traub/ Brandenburg

Discussion about Committee terms:

The Handbook was changed several years ago to say that committee members start at the beginning of January. Previously it changed after the annual meeting. Tamela recommended that the Handbook policies be changed to start all committee appointments as soon as possible after the annual meeting. Connie suggested a motion be sent to the Board for review. Tamela will first start by asking Sue Grier or whoever was president when that was changed to see why.

Executive Director's Report

Tom provided the annual accounting report which includes end-of-year statements on profit/loss from each of the shops. This was requested at the last Board meeting. To clarify the figures, Tom noted that Guild Administrative costs are assigned to the Folk Art Center. The Board thanked Tom for the clarification.

After the Biltmore discussion (see next), Tom returned to Guild organization and noted that he is preparing to interview candidates for the Outreach Director position. He would like to find someone who could fill a more full-time position combining this position with someone to help Millie with print and social media outreach. Side note from Tamela, Julie Roepnack-Calhoun had asked Millie to do a technical help session for the Membership Committee and those attending the member social. All those requests should go through Tom. Background issue: There was a time when members could update their own page on the Guild's website. Now they have to give it to Millie because of problems that had resulted from that. This is a lot of work for Millie. Millie has given Tom a list of work that she needs help with. Tom is hoping to make it a $\frac{3}{4}$ time position to start. The goal

would be to eventually move to full-time. Tom noted the staff have received major increases in compensation over the last 4-5 years, with starting wages now at \$15 an hour.

This discussion morphed into a discussion of the Emerging artist program and their booths at the fair, and the consultant we had hired to review the fair and booths and their recommendations.

Biltmore Discussion:

Tom presented a Facebook page stating that the Biltmore Village building was, or will soon be, for sale. He then got phone calls from several real estate people. April 30, an agent called Tom to say he had a Florida client who would be interested in purchasing the building. The next day another agent called (John Spake with Spake Real Estate), saying a building at 9 All Souls Crescent is under contract at \$1.7 million. He said that if he was selling our building the commission would be 4%. He said we might want to get a new appraisal. Tom told him that the Board might consider a \$1.6M offer. He said that seemed reasonable. The next day Tom got an offer from Ralph Pagano (through Scott Raines of Dewey Properties), a Florida restaurant owner for \$1.4 million. Tom will get back to them to say that figure was less than we were thinking about at this time. We are in the process of repairs. Target date for listing it is August 1st after the repairs are completed. At this point, we are working on the building, preparing it to be sold. They can come for a site visit. John Spake told Tom that the back parking lot could be paved and does not have to be left as gravel.

The Guild bought the building for \$725K and has put about that into it. Full restoration is significantly more.

Tamela mentioned that if we are able to sell the building, we need to be thinking about what we should do next. Judy (the shop manager at Biltmore Village and Grove Arcade) had suggested a shop in Highlands...

Tom noted that the Grove Arcade shop was the main distribution point for VIP tickets to the Fair other than the membership, which was valuable to the Guild.

Tamela suggested that Millie could make posters for the Grove Arcade shop, talking about the Biltmore Village shop history and before and after Helene (we

need to remove the posters and signs seeking contributions to restore the Biltmore Village shop).

Amy raised a question about the Mountain Made signs in the Grove Arcade shop. When she was demonstrating people seemed to think some of the shop was still the Mountain Made Shop. We were using it to attract former Mountain Made customers but maybe the time is here to change that.

Amy also noted that when she was demonstrating, people there were very uninterested in what she was doing, unlike those at the Folk Art Center.

Committee Reports:

Fair Committee

A lengthy discussion ensued about the recommendation from the Fair Committee to shorten two years of summer fairs to three days instead of four. The Fair Committee recommendation was based on a survey of participants in the Summer Fair, of which twelve members suggested cutting the length of the fair.

Connie moved that we accept the proposal of the Fair Committee, seconded by Katherine. The board unanimously opposed the proposal as it is written.

There are a variety of issues. The first was that the Board has since done a survey of the entire membership. Committee chairs are reminded that surveys do need to be approved by the Board. The results of the Board survey were not available to the Fair Committee when it developed the proposal and should be considered. The last time (2017/2018) that the fair cut a day, the guild lost approximately \$8000 in ticket sales. If fair days were cut and booth fees were also cut, this would exacerbate the loss, though there would be some savings from lowered costs of renting the center. Perhaps there are ways of addressing the length of the fair that would help develop income for the members and the guild, such as a sponsor. Discussions included a preview evening on Thursdays that would be a separate ticket, with the fair on Friday through Sunday. This would make the production a four-day event but help maintain sales and booth fees while cutting center costs. Others would be to have the fair scheduled for four days but have sections of the fair where exhibitors could show for two or three days. This might increase participation by artists who wanted to show for fewer days at lower costs. Perhaps two, two-day sessions?

Guild Fair demonstrator compensation policies:

The Fair normally has up to six demonstrators throughout the fair. There are now up to four people who are assigned 10x10 ft. booths. They are compensated and pay no booth fees. They can sell items, and currently, their sales go through the Guild, which collects 25%. The booth should be predominantly educational, so the space should be at least 75% for educational purposes. They currently are compensated at \$100 a day (\$400 for the run of the fair). There are also 2 booths for the Heritage and Education Committee that operate similarly at similar compensation (totaling \$600 a day, or \$2400 for the run of the fair). Additionally, the Qualla Mutual is exhibiting at the fair this summer with no compensation and will not pay fees on sales. As a third option, an exhibitor may get an increased size booth (five feet longer) if they demonstrate at no additional cost, but they are not compensated. This is only available on the arena level.

Motion to change the fair demonstrator policies for the 2026 Guild shows to provide \$200 in compensation per day and be allowed to sell their own work through the Guild (optional), with no commission and no booth fee. Only 25% of the booth can be for sales. Motion by Mark Traub seconded by Amy Brandenburg. Passed unanimously.

Right now, the budget for demonstrators is \$3000/fair. We can have up to eight demonstrators currently. This would limit it to four if we are to stay within budget. We will see how many apply! Tamela's goal is to have perhaps eight people demonstrating.

Annual Meeting Committee

Robert reported that Nancy Graham is stepping down as Committee Co-Chair.

Education Committee

Finance Committee

Heritage

Membership

Standards

Standards is meeting Tuesday the 25th. There are three voting members of the committee on each image jury. Others are invited to attend. They are being a bit more selective. Next object jury in August. Erica Bailey, Mark Tickle as possible chairs.

Board Member Handbook

A document that appears to be intended as a Board members Handbook has been developed by Teresa Brittain, last year's chair of the nominating committee and former President of the Board. She sent in a set of proposed guidelines for Board members along with information for a Board packet. Much of this information is in the current Handbook, but this is reformatted and proposes some changes in the orientation of new Board members. Following a review of the document during the meeting, Tamela will get back to Teresa to discuss it further to see the intent and explore uses.