



National Lutheran Secretariat

Executive Committee and Appointed Committee Chairpersons Meeting

Minutes of March 21, 2023 Meeting

Present: John Aclin, Steve Barnett, Pastor G. Karl Gaston, Karen Weires, Jane Winge, Carolyn Witham, Brian Schwarz, Sue Bathe, Amanda Hunter, Dave Leverenz, Marcia Poisel, and Randy Poisel

Absent: Jeanne Gaston and Eric Needle

Call to Order and Opening Prayer: John called the meeting of executive committee and appointed committee chairpersons of the National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) to order and Pastor G. Karl opened the meeting with prayer.

Old Business

Minutes: Minutes from the February 28, 2023 meeting were accepted by acclamation.

2024 NLS Annual Gathering (NLSAG): Brian Comeno, Light in the Desert Lay Director, joined the call. Light in the Desert officially offered to host the 2024 NLSAG in Las Vegas. The NLS Executive Committee (NLSEC) gratefully accepted the offer. Due to the host site, The Plaza, the registration fee will be higher than recent gatherings. Approximately \$335 is expected to cover the cost of an individual's double occupancy hotel room accommodations, meals (Thursday lunch to Sunday breakfast), and meeting room spaces.

Appointed Committee Reports

Communications - Amanda: The team continues to send out Pastor G. Karl's devotions via Constant Contact, post daily prayers to Facebook and has sent out emails through Constant Contact as requested. Amanda updated the NLS annual gathering webpage with the gathering logo and verse and she posted John's invitation to attend the NLSAG on the main website page. She's also made updates to the AG website as requested. Amanda requested any information for the Conexiones as soon as possible as she will send out the next Conexiones prior to the end of March.

Archivist - Dave: Dave continues to wait for the new web server so that the digitized archives can be saved there. He is also waiting for the approximately 20 files to be converted for archiving. John will work on getting answers for Dave.

Database coordinators - Marcia/Randy: The NLSAG registration form is in use. There are currently 21 paid registrations and 9 or 10 started but not finalized.

Non-profit compliance - Sue: John asked that the non-profit compliance coordinator track when renewals are needed. Steve will confirm, but the current NLSEC understands that the Luther Rose emblem trademark was renewed in 2020 for ten years. The Via de Cristo name trademark will be renewed in 2023 for ten years. Brian has an attorney that is willing to do the filing pro bono.

New Business

Annual dues: The annual dues emails have been sent to either treasurers or lay directors. Nine dues checks have been received since January. One community advised they have dissolved.

Dissolution of affiliated secretariats: No one on the current board is aware of steps to be taken when we are advised that an affiliated secretariat disbands. It would be good to receive confirmation of the inactive or dissolved status from the lay director. Karen will reach out to the region coordinator (RC) for the community that advised Steve of dissolution to confirm the secretariat's status. The RC can ask the secretariat if they have thought about distribution of assets. Upon confirmation, NLS will remove the community from the NLS website (viadecristo.org/resources/region-#/).

HC/EC communication roles: As NLSAG communication has broadened beyond the Conexiones to now include live-streaming and blogging and the NLS Communication Coordinator position is relatively a new position (2020), Amanda advised that the Host Committee documentation and NLS appointed Communication chairperson responsibilities be updated to clearly reflect who is responsible for what. Amanda will provide a suggestion to Jane who will, in turn, bring the recommended changes to the NLSEC for review.

Lily Foundation grant: As a result of the 4th day community meeting, NLS became aware of and started researching Lily Foundation grants, especially "Thriving Congregations". Proposal applications are due June 23rd and approximately sixty awards will be granted in the fall of 2023. Jane and John will continue to work on this.

Old Business

2022 activity reports: We've received 32 of 42 activity report replies. Carolyn will continue to work to get activity reports.

Website committee: John now has an artist, a web video person, and a couple of technical people for the website update. He asked that the RCs and all EC members share helpful materials for use by other communities. The committee will start with making the site better for seekers and for sponsorship resources.

Nominating committee: Kim Brownlow agreed to serve as the nominating committee chair. There is a nominating committee of eight. President, Vice President of Outreach (VPO) and Secretary positions are up for election this year. Karen will submit her application to continue as VPO. John shared names of potential candidates for president as he will not run for re-election.

Executive Committee Member Reports

VP of Administration - Jane: Gold Coast advised they are not in a position to host NLSAG in 2025.

Spiritual Director: Pastor G. Karl continues to prepare and share devotions and prayers. He asked about his responsibilities, beyond installation of new officers, as it relates to the NLSAG. The Host Committee is planning worship services and will involve G. Karl as needed.

Treasurer - Steve: Steve reviewed the quarter's income, expenses, and current financial status. Fiscal year-to-date, we are at a net loss of just over \$7,400. This includes the loan made to the 2023 Host Committee. He continues to work to get information about the distribution center so we can determine what filing is needed for Utah. He will also continue to get financial records back onto a desktop version of QuickBooks.

Secretary - Carolyn: Carolyn emailed every secretariat in the last month either with a thank you for replying to the annual activity survey or a gentle reminder to do so. As each secretariat is emailed with thanks, the number of delegates for the 2023 NLSAG and updated Constitution and Bylaws are being shared as well.

Outreach - Karen: Karen provided updates about a few communities and the work that the RCs are doing supporting and encouraging those communities. She has reached out to Northern Lights twice about leadership training information and will try calling next. Karen continues to seek a region 2 coordinator. This month, she talked with an individual that declined.

Executive Director - Brian: Brian reported on NLSAG preparations from the Host Committee perspective. The committee will be meeting in person this coming Saturday and it currently includes about 30 people. Fundraising is also going very well.

President - John: John shared a summary of a few conversations he's had over the last month (e.g., a suggestion to commercialize a song that NLS owns the rights to, providing guidance to lay directors upon request, etc.) He hosted a Lay Director roundtable on March 12th that included 18 attendees.

Closing Prayer – Pastor G. Karl closed the meeting with prayer.

Next Regular Meeting – April 25, 2023 at 8:00pm EST for NLS Executive Committee members

Summary of Action Items

1. All who have not yet registered for 2023 NLSAG to register within the next week.
2. Amanda to provide list of NLSAG communication tasks along with proposed responsibility recommendations (i.e., NLS or HC) to Jane.
3. Carolyn to send Karen and RCs responses to the 'health of your community question' from survey results.
4. Carolyn to send Constitution and Bylaws to all NLSEC members.
5. Carolyn to verify current amended version of Constitution and Bylaws are on our website.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Witham