

Folknet board retreat  
April 11, 2015

In attendance: Mike Harris, Rick Szekelyi, Kate Kooser, Bill Schilling, Red Chrosniak, Joanne Laessig, Charlie Mosbrook, Larry Bruner

1. Discussion opened with a reading of [Article II of the Folknet Bylaws](#), which states our purpose and methods. This is what we say we are and is a good place to start.
  - a. Our efforts in *Education* was noted as being lacking.
    - i. What workshops could we do? What workshops would be strictly outreach? What workshops would entice our memberships?
      1. draw on local experts to help facilitate them.
        - a. Instrument care
          - i. instrument building?
          - ii. fret care
          - iii. set-up
        - b. fiddle tunes for guitar players
        - c. how to play at an Irish session
        - d. songwriting
          - i. finishing a song
        - e. How to play harmonica
        - f. the business side of things?
          - i. alternative venues
          - ii. tax information
      - ii. Partner with local libraries to put on educational workshops
        1. musical literacy
        2. getting instruments in people's hands - hands-on experiences
2. **Bylaws discussion:**
  - a. Article II: Purpose: No changes proposed
  - b. Article III: Membership: To be discussed later in the meeting
  - c. Article IV: Meetings
    - i. mentions that we should be having two general membership meetings each year, which we have not done in several years.
      1. Can we do one or two different events (like a picnic, clambake, pig roast, or a social) that would bring folks out to the meeting.
      2. Possibly connect with another activity like Heights Arts Hop
    - ii. possible change in the bylaws might be warranted for the board/trustees meetings.
  - d. Article V: Trustees: No changes proposed
  - e. Article VI: Officers: No changes proposed
  - f. Article VII: Committees:
    - i. Currently we have struggled to maintain standing committees (not necessarily the work that they do)

1. Large part of this problem has strictly been bodies
- g. Article VIII: Elections: No changes proposed
- h. Article IX: Operations:
  - i. Possible change to the two-signatures clause. With the advent and use of paypal for many things, this makes this challenging.
- i. Article X: Amendments: No changes proposed
- j. Article XI: Dissolution: No changes proposed
3. Educational outreach
  - a. What outreach could we be doing to reach out to both our membership and the general public?
    - i. look at venues like the Barking Spider to do Saturday afternoon/evening workshop - try to do tie-ins to get folks to stick around to hear music after and buy drinks
    - ii. songwriter workshop
      1. At the Barking Spider before the open mics - Songwriting workshop/meeting at 6pm with sign-ups for the open mic at 7:30pm
      2. Recommended that we create a committee to work on workshops
    - iii. look at the old Kent folk festival workshop lists and the FARM/FAI workshops
      1. finding musicality in your songs
    - iv.
4. House concerts
  - a. It is consistent with our mission and purpose to host these types of concerts
  - b. Considerations:
    - i. handicap accessible
    - ii. performing rights agencies - make sure we don't get dinged with anything
    - iii. local opening act
5. Membership:
  - a. Getting the 501(c)3 cleared up is a big stumbling block to doing a membership campaign.
    - i. as soon as it is cleared up, we'll look at doing a membership campaign as well as looking at organizational members
  - b. Is there a way to automate the system a bit?
    - i. automatic reminders for renewal
    - ii. automatic thank you for renewal/new membership
  - c. Membership benefits
    - i. wait till after the 501(c)3
6. Newsletter
  - a. Do we want to revisit the idea of having a newsletter?
    - i. challenge to get folks to write content for the newsletter

1. get each committee to submit something on at least a quarterly basis
    2. include as part of the calendar - gives a secondary reason for people to open the calendar
  - ii. The idea right now is to build content for the website/facebook for now and if this can be grown and sustained then revisit the idea of looking at starting a newsletter.
7. Folknet compilation CD:
  - a. Do we want to do another compilation CD?
    - i. Not right now
8. Public Relations:
  - a. Look to get a person or form a small group of people who would be our main means of outreach to media outlets and the like
    - i. compiling an email list of media related folks
9. Funding
  - a. Mostly postpone this discussion until after 501(c)3 is sorted
10. Folknet Goals
  - a. Short term: This year
    - i. Workshops
    - ii. Dance
    - iii. Community sings
    - iv. update list of performers, educators on the website
    - v. clambake/picnic
    - vi. membership
    - vii. merchandise
    - viii. concert series
    - ix. survey for members
      1. what would they like to see
  - b. Longterm: next three years
    - i. FARMette - day long workshops
    - ii. newsletter
    - iii. continue the conversation about racial diversity in Folknet
  - c. develop an annual evaluation based on Article II of the Bylaws to help us evaluate the previous year and look forward to the next. Should be a fairly simple task of putting this together.