

P.E.I. Writers' Guild AGM Minutes
June 11, 2016
Next Door (at Merchantman), Charlottetown

Twenty-four people attended the 2016 annual general meeting of the P.E.I. Writers' Guild. Sean Wiebe chaired the meeting, held outdoors at Next Door on one of the spring's rare warm afternoons.

Minutes & Agenda

The minutes of the 2015 annual general meeting were adopted, and the 2016 meeting agenda was accepted.

President's Report – Keir Lowther

Keir reported that the guild and its core group of volunteers had accomplished much during 2015-2016:

- hosting the popular Battle Tales writing competition
- continuing open mics started by former poet laureate Dianne Hicks Morrow
- offering well-attended workshops on topics including writing for children (Sheree Fitch), life writing (Richard Lemm), and editing (Whitney Moran, Nimbus Publishing)
- partnering with the Reading Town P.E.I. festival
- boosting awareness of writing activities on social media
- revamping the newsletter and making it consistent (10th of every second month)
- hosting an incredibly successful Island Literary Awards in May

Treasurer's Report – Cindy Venema-Midgley

The guild began its year with \$4,051.92 in the bank and ended with \$7,249.26. Much of that increase, however, related to funds supporting the recent Island Literary Awards. The guild's revenues included more than \$2,100 in workshop profits and \$1,045 in memberships. Cindy distributed detailed financial statements for the information of members.

Membership – President Keir Lowther

- The guild maintained a strong membership of 98.
- Efforts to improve services included formalizing the welcome process and drafting a statement about the value of membership.
- Board member Bruce McCallum added that the guild had discussed the importance of outreach, and that remained an important focus for the future.

Island Literary Awards – President Keir Lowther

The 2016 Cox & Palmer Island Literary Awards had been moved up to May to partner with Reading Town, coincide with the P.E.I. Book Awards, and fall in line with the school year.

Keir credited new co-ordinator Becka Viau for ensuring a smooth transition, holding incredibly professional ceremonies at the Mack (adult categories) and The Guild (student categories), increasing sponsorship, and attracting a strong number of entries.

During his comments, Keir distributed Becka's detailed final report. He noted some of the highlights related to the success of the awards:

- Entries totalled 232, including 41 from adults and 191 from students.
- Becka developed a professional customized sponsorship package. Sponsors were accepting of the date change and appreciated increased recognition.
- Media and overall PR around the awards increased.
- Donations increased \$700 over 2015, to total \$13,200 for 2016.
- The board had approved the co-ordinator's bonus at 80% of the awards surplus. (The report listed the surplus at \$1,576.63, for a bonus of \$1,261.30.)
- Becka had agreed to return as co-ordinator in 2017.

Strategic Planning – Chaired by Sean Wiebe

In discussing the guild's future, members offered the following suggestions:

- increase publicity of the benefits of guild membership
- encourage The Guardian to feature a local book reviewer
- host more Battles Tales competitions
- create a web-based calendar of events
- host a poetry slam
- pursue partnerships with artists, screenwriters, podcasters, and others interested in writing

New Board

The officers for 2016-2017 were elected by acclamation:

President	Keith Burgoyne
Vice-President	Lori Mayne
Treasurer	Cindy Venema-Midgley
Secretary	Maureen Duffy Cobb
Members-at-Large	Michael Conway, Richard Furlong, Bruce McCallum, Charity Becker, and Kelly Sampson

Keir Lowther would remain on the board as past-president.

Open Mic

After the business meeting, Ken Williams, Wendy Jones, Kathy Birt, Carl McNally, and Keith Burgoyne entertained the group with selections from their poetry.