



**Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association
Fundraising Committee Meeting
Minutes**

March 26th, 2013 5:00pm

Attending: D. Ionata (chair), P. August, A. Morrison, Yvette Beau (guest)

Regrets: A. Desbonnet (Resigned)

The Committee backgrounded Yvette concerning WPWA's former wet paint auctions at the Carolina Mill, including number of attendees, gross and net returns, and that the auctions were abandoned because we could no longer justify committing one staff person full time for three months to plan and organize them for a net return of about \$7,500 at best.

The committee also backgrounded Yvette concerning our experience with fundraising at annual meetings and that we have abandoned this activity because of the relatively low net returns of less than \$2,500 or so in return for huge investments of time and effort by staff and board members.

Yvette indicated she has limited, but not extensive experience with art auctions, that she has done public relations and marketing work and that she has a good network of acquaintances and friends in the art communities of South County and beyond. She also said she was administrator of the Master of Arts in Teaching program at Brown for 12 years.

In the context of a general discussion of holding a fund-raising auction, D. Ionata said WPWA was considering hiring a coordinator for the sole purpose of doing all the work necessary to put together a fundraising auction. Yvette said she would be willing to do this and that she has time to do it.

She also said an auction should not be confined to art only because of the limited potential of art-only auctions held in South County, that an auction should include all manner of items, including antiques and crafts if available, and that it would be best held in October on a Friday evening.

When asked how much money such an auction could raise she replied that the amount of money generated would depend on the number of people in attendance and how well it had been planned.

She said WPWA should get 100% of the proceeds from the sale of art objects otherwise the donors of non-art auction items would also expect the same type of split provided to artists.

Potential venues were discussed. D. Ionata said that while the Carolina Mill would be an excellent venue for an auction, that it would probably not be available for public events this year because the grounds are still being cleaned up and rehabilitated from damage caused by the flood of 2010.

The mill building on Route 138 in Hope Valley where Yvette lives is not available. A variety of other venues was discussed, including the Jonathan Edwards Vineyard, Stonington Vineyards, Salt Marsh Vineyards, holding the auction indoors or out.

A. Morrison said the old airplane hanger at Salt Marsh Vineyard is huge but that the vineyard, which is not in the watershed, is usually fully-booked. She said Jonathan Edwards keeps a large tent up all

summer. D. Ionata said he would call Jonathan Edwards to see if he would donate use of the tent. Yvette said she would give some thought to other candidate venues.

The committee asked Yvette (and also in greater detail in written correspondence following the meeting) to provide an outline proposal that includes:

- A summary of the different activities that would be undertaken to plan for, organize, and implement an auction;
- The amount of time that would be required in hours spanning the number of weeks that would be needed;
- Recommended type of auction -- art only or an auction that includes all sorts of items;
- Recommendations concerning entry fee, food, and other possible amenities;
- Would it be possible for you to comment briefly on advertising/outreach both to the public and to people who would donate items to the auction; an auction program; auction/auction program sponsors;
- Proposed overhead budget, not including your compensation, by line item;
- Compensation.

The committee told Yvette, in the above-referenced written correspondence, that WPWA would prefer to enter into an arrangement in which the auction coordinator receives a percentage of the net proceeds.

Yvette said she would submit a proposal to the committee by the end of next week.