

Lansing Makers Network

Board of Directors

Regular Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2025, 7:00 pm at 2730 Alpha Access

Board Members:

Charlie Finkel, Chair

Jody Applegate

Lex Savoyat

Carl Raymond (arrived 7:20)

Joe Zimmerman

benny Vasquez

James Etherton

Guests: Brian Adams, Maria Alcaraz, Jerry Fahner, Troy Gordon, David Torgoff, Lou Gedvilas, Maria Riolo, Additional Members joined via Google Meet

Meeting Secretary: Lex Savoyat

Meeting called to order:

1. Housekeeping (Charlie Finkel)

- **Approving Agenda**
 - Motion:benny Second:
- **Declaration of newly relevant conflicts of interest for board members**
 - None

2. Chairperson's Report

- It is remarkable that we've been able to exist for 11 years with an all volunteer staff, and with one person in charge, after their own full time job. This is a difficult way to run this organization. Is it time to start considering paying people to make some things easier, and to free up volunteers to do other things to assist the makerspace?

3. President's Report

- In the process of updating the handbook that will include a documented process for revoking a member's membership
- Shift leaders and other volunteers will be trained on telling people that they are allowed to ask people to leave, and that there is a method to remove members if needed.
- There have been some issues with business processes at the front desk. Brian is working on a process document to assist with this.

- Area manager changes: John Cardinal has resigned as Ironworks Manager. Maria R. is available to do checkouts in the meantime. James Hays is replacing Evelyn as Craft Area Manager. Adam Tait is now area manager of the newly split out Welding Area.
- New positions under consideration: Someone to manage the front desk, helping meet member needs. Facilities Manager, to help keep the building itself running smoothly and manage the area managers.
- We currently have 28 staff positions: 10 are shift managers, 11 area managers, volunteer coordinator, education coordinator, facilities manager. If we are going to start hiring, where do we want to start? In some cases, we have board members doing these roles. There are 14 gratis memberships for all of these positions.
 - benny: Will the two new positions take enough pressure off of you? Brian: Yes, I think so.

4. Treasurer's report

- **January**
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jYVQLQkKU_G_TNSi9I2jFzEPADoOp8GX/view?usp=sharing
 - Rent check was not cashed until Feb.
 - We did a good amount of income, partially because of yearly memberships being purchased. Also had income from Ornaments.
 - -\$1100 for January
- **February (partial)**
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TR9IW7-APjM_Is8Az0b3CwLaG6leyuHR/view?usp=sharing
 - Gas bill is high this month. It has been very cold, we've seen an increase in memberships and classes.
 - How-To Holiday: \$2340.27
 - Largest ever BWL bill
 - Rathbun Insurance is in the final process. Expecting ~\$400/month. We can do financing but would still need to do 50% upfront and the rest over 9 months and it would overall cost more. Includes Liability and EPLI insurance, which would also cover our volunteers.
 - Charlie: Is there any unrealized revenue that we can report? Jody: Just 10 days of classes, and membership.
- **2024 Revenue and Expenditures**
 - Charlie: Looking at 2024, we had a shortfall of around \$25k for the year.

5. Secretary's Report

- Minutes for last months' meeting have been posted
 - <https://talk.lansingmakersnetwork.org/t/board-meeting-january-22-7pm/6184>
 - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1frjN7njJag9IZyi5OoeyJfTowbcBU1mUKmrvRtMIA-8/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.vabmpbxwtq81>

- Lex presents a Motion to Pass Certified Resolution of the Membership or Board of Directors Authorizing the Application for Special License; Carl seconded the motion; unanimously approved
 - On March 19th we're hosting Astronomy on Tap again (last year brought in about 120 people)
 - Discussion included questions about the event in general.
- Reminder to Board to complete the Annual Board of Directors Information Update
 - <https://www.cognitoforms.com/lansingmakersnetwork1/annualboardofdirectorsinformationupdate>
- Annual Review of Policies: Gift Acceptance Policy: [W Gift Acceptance.docx](#)
 - The [Donation Wish List](#) needs an update.
 - Motion to accept the Gift Acceptance Policy: James Second: Jody unanimously approved
 - Discussion:
 - Lysne will review the Gift Acceptance policy to ensure that it is up to best practices. If changes are needed, an online vote will be called.
 - Brian Adams recommends a governance committee to go over all of these.

6. Continued Business

- 501(c)(3) status - Update from President
 - Carl has been talking to the accountants about all of the financial reports and the narrative for the application. Maria A. created the reports that she needed, but there was one additional report needed that should be sent tomorrow.
 - No current ETA
- Insurance status - Update from Brian, Jody
 - Covered under the treasury update, but we should have insurance within a couple weeks

7. Committee Updates

Board Interview

- Carl, Joe, and Lex interviewed Lysne Tait and recommended her to the board.
- Discussion - Lex is specifically excited for her fundraising expertise
 - Charlie asked - Why does she want to be here?
 - One of her children is active in the space and she is very excited about the space we're providing especially for younger people.
- Motion to vote Lysne Tait onto the LMN Board: Joe Second: Jody
 - Unanimous approval
- The committee was also asked to create a plan for when the long-term people want to step down and when we want new members to join

Volunteer Management

- Report by James
- No update, Nicole has been sick.

Budget

- Report by Charlie, Jody
 - Discussion focused on difficulties caused by limited revenue streams
 - Area managers have been asked to supply a prioritized needs list
 - We will have a 2025 proposed budget based on 2024
 - Maria A. helped with a sample projection of a 2025 budget that included a goal of \$60,000 cash to cover some part-time staff.
 - The current projection doesn't include trying to cover last year's \$20,000 in shortfall
 - The new funding in the projected 2025 budget was equally spread over 3 areas: Increased membership, increased classes, increased sponsorships
- Discussion:
 - James: What about a development officer, someone that brings in sponsorships and they get a cut of the funds raised? This is going to a fundraising committee.
 - benny and Lysne will be exploring this
 - Do they need to be employees?
 - Brian: If we end up adding a Get/Give/Get-off clause to the board, we need to make sure we state it very plainly.
 - Charlie: Let's think about this and talk about it next month as well.
 - Lysne: Would include bringing in members, volunteering hours, attending events.
 - Joe: There used to be a board member agreement that included something similar, will look for that. [old wiki](#)

Enhanced membership definitions and agreements

- Report by Carl, Lex
 - Drafted an agreement based on the one that folks at the A2 space use
 - Drafted a new handbook to accompany it
 - Next step is to get it reviewed by a lawyer
 - We didn't get a reply from the one that we tried, but have a name of a new one
 - Brian would like a copy-sent

Developing President Evaluation

- Report by benny
 - benny sent the process and the form to the board, but didn't get feedback from anyone but Charlie. She requests that the board review and get feedback to her sometime this week, to complete evaluation by the end of March.

8. New Business

- Elimination/replacement of current "guest discourse" segment of board meeting.
 - Reasoning: This meeting is already long and much is happening.

- Replace with a different meeting, allowing people to bring items to the board ahead of time.
- Discussion
 - Lex: Right now this is the only place that the members can access us, and we don't want to cut that off. I'd like to get whatever new process in place before cutting that portion of the meeting
 - James: People should be able to speak and be heard, but we don't necessarily need to solve those issues during the meeting.
 - Lysne: you could put a time limit for each person.
 - Joe: This is really the only time I have to hear from people, so I appreciate having the member discourse. We could review the topics ahead of time to determine if they need to be addressed at the next meeting.
 - Lex: Suggest creating a code of conduct
 - Brian: There shouldn't be an around-the-table and not-around the table distinction between members and board members
 - Carl: Echoes Joe's comment, we can't get rid of this until something else is in place. A separate meeting, something where the majority of leadership is going to be there.
 - Joe: Makers show-and-tell and board gathering?
 - Comment from the online: that's also being discussed on the talk site:
<https://talk.lansingmakersnetwork.org/t/id-like-to-organize-a-regular-gathering-for-members-anyone-to-talk-about-their-work/6277/6>
 - Lysne: Perhaps a rename from Guest Discourse to Comment?
 - Charlie will put together a plan on what this might look like for the next meeting.
 - Jody: Is it a timing thing? Could we talk about starting the meeting earlier?
- Board members individual responsibility for fundraising
- Committees to develop strategies and/or scripts for finding sponsors and new members

9. Guest Discourse

- Jerry Fahner: I come to these meetings because it is the only way of knowing what is going on. I didn't realize that you were the leader now Charlie. Is there somewhere else where I can learn about what is happening?
 - Charlie: Minutes are posted on the talksite.
 - benny: How would you like to consume the news? Jerry: Email. benny suggests adding updates to the newsletter.
- David: I think finding pleasant ways to interact would make a big difference.
 - If there is a fundraising committee, I would like to help.
 - Publicizing the board meetings would be a good idea, adding to social media, physical signs
 - Learned about the makerspace from social media posts about the DIY Musical Instruments Group

- Had heard about the space around 10 years ago, went to the temple club, and have wanted to visit ever since.
- Lou: On Sunday morning, there was no one to open the space and I ended up letting people in. I didn't know who to reach out to. Having a list of contacts would be helpful.
 - Came into the blacksmithing shop on a Tuesday and the thermostat was set to 65. I recommend adding an automated system.
- Brian - seconding Lou that I love the idea of SOPs for the front desk. It'll be a big help when teaching outside open hours too!
- Maria R: I'd be very sad to have member voices removed from board meetings. As a member, having any chance to communicate with the whole board when you're all together and on-task is a really big deal.

Schedule next board meeting

- March 26th, 2025 7pm

Motion to Adjourn: Joe Second: James unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 9:03

9. Executive Session

No Executive Session held