

Arkansas Partners of the Americas

Board Minutes, Nov. 13, 2005

Peabody Hotel, Little Rock, Arkansas

Board President Susan Heily called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Present were:

President Susan Heily	Vice President Steve Neuse
Regional Vice President, Central Arkansas --	
Regional Vice President, NW Arkansas – Tom Green	
Past President Thecia Taylor	
Secretary Louise Montgomery	Treasurer Wayne Swegle
Director at Large Diana Worthen	Director at Large LeAnn Robertson
Director at Large –	Executive Director Bob Frans

Committee chairs present were:

Public Relations and Partnership Development -- Bill Millager
Health and Wellness – Thecia Taylor
Women and Families –
Culture – Jo Ann Kaminsky
Education and Professional Development – Sera Streiff-Vena
International Convention Ad-Hoc committee co-chairs George Vena and Thecia Taylor
Democratic Initiatives Bettie Lu Lancaster Direcciones Editor Bob Frans

Others: Jeanine N. Neuse and Leah Wilkinson and two visitors from Bolivia, Harold Isevich Melgar and E. Bolivia Partners incoming President Jorge Ybarnegaray).

Heily noted that the necessity for some board members to take care of convention business necessitated shortening the meeting and foregoing routine committee reports.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of the July board meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Swegle said the treasury is in bad shape, to which Vena replied that dues money would be coming in during the next quarter. Swegle's report is attached.

President's Report: Heily asked the incoming president of the Santa Cruz East Bolivian Partners chapter to speak. Jorge Ybarnegaray outlined plans for the new year including youth football teams, health, agriculture and culture. Neuse asked that the president send a list of committee chairs to him, and Heily noted that the list of chair had been disseminated but the list had no information on how Arkansas Partners could reach the Eastern Bolivia Partners chairs. Ybarnegaray said he had sent such a list to POA in Washington.

Heily presented gifts to the two Bolivian visitors (Ybarnegaray and Isevich Melgar). She also presented gifts to Taylor and George Vena for their successful planning and execution of the international convention. Both Taylor and Vena reciprocated by thanking "a lot of people" who had helped them with convention activities. Taylor named

Mark Robertson, who planned the HAM reception; LeAnn Robertson, who planned the marketplace; Jo Ann Kaminsky, who arranged to bring art from Bolivia to exhibit with Arkansas artists' work; and Steve Neuse for many things.

Executive Director's Report: Helen Wilson had been made an honorary member. Vena identified her as a missionary to Bolivia who lived in Santa Cruz for some 25 years. Though in her 90s, Vena said she drives to Little Rock for Partners events from Hot Springs.

Frans noted that he has a box of Partners brochures, which one speaker pointed to as a help in recruiting members. Frans suggested that members write the Partners address – his UA office – on the brochures.

Frans said a scholarship in honor of his late wife, Maria Teresa Frans, awarded to a Bolivian student at the July board meeting, had not yet been paid. He asked the treasurer to authorize the University of Arkansas Foundation to pay that scholarship.

Swegle questioned why the treasurer should be involved. George Vena recommended this procedure: The board awards the scholarship, then the treasurer notifies the Foundation to send a check to the student. (The formal name of the fund is Fundacion Maria Teresa Villanueva de Frans, Account. No. 30-003131.)

Frans noted that this is the first scholarship to be awarded from the fund, and he asked that the board consider how to increase the fund, now at \$1,700. He said with Bolivian students coming to the University of Central Arkansas, the board also needed to decide their relationship to the scholarship.

Heily proposed putting the concept of building the scholarship fund in the hands of the Education Committee and ask members to work on questions about the scholarship and fund.

Frans said he had a form for contacting the University; Swegle suggested that they go to the new treasurer, George Vena. Taylor said that Heily had donated to the scholarship fund in the amount of \$50, and Vena said Heily had done the same for him.

Isevich indicated he wanted to speak. He thanked Partners for bringing him to the conference. "It has been a phenomenal experience for me," he said. He also suggested that the two partnerships plan programming for two years. Vena stressed the need to exchange email addresses. Vena suggested that Neuse send a copy of the Boren video explaining the importance of Partners to the Eastern Bolivia chapter. Taylor said she could not get a copy of the video of President Clinton addressing the 2005 convention.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT:

Taylor said the committee's slate had been voted on. Frans added that the ballots were sent directly to him. Those nominated are:

President – Steven Neuse

Vice President – Wayne Swegle
Regional Vice President, NW Arkansas – Tom Green
Regional Vice President, Central Arkansas – Thecia Taylor
Secretary – Sera Vena
Treasurer – George Vena
NW Director at Large – Nadine Spears
Director at Large – Jorge Mendoza

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION REPORT:

Vena said the chapter got a grant for bringing Ecuadorian students to the convention (The musical group had been in the United States for other reasons and POA wanted them to come to the convention.) Taylor said she decided to put them in a hotel (instead of attempting to find homes to house them). The youngest of the dozen youths was 9 years old, she said.

Green asked how many attended the convention. The planners anticipated 120, but Taylor said Clinton Presidential Library official Skip Rutherford estimated that 200 attended the Clinton Library event. George Vena said conventions in the south (i.e., in Latin America) draw two times as many attendees as those in the United States.

Millager asked (1) that he be authorized to research and create a free blog to serve all partnerships; (2) that the blog's purpose be to facilitate activities to advance purposes espoused during the convention; (3) that the Arkansas Partnership at large be seen as the initiating sponsor, not Millager as an individual member.

In essence, Millager reported:

- A discussion with POA board member Jan Hertzberg led him to mention the utility of a BLOG to facilitate further exchange of information, plans, and accomplishments among all chapters and staff. Hertzberg agreed and urged that they meet with Matt Clausen to determine actions. No meeting was possible, but Clausen suggested bringing up the idea in Adam Stubits's Partners Counts session. Stubits was supportive as well.
- Malcolm Butler, reacting to Millager's suggestion of the blog, said "Do it! And we'll publicize it. De Acuerdo?" And he replied, "Done."
- During the banquet, Millager briefly discussed the project with Clausen and Stubits together, adding that staff support would be essential, since he would be unable to provide very much in the way of administration. They agreed, with apparent enthusiasm.

Neuse moved and Taylor seconded a motion approving Millager's pursuing the blog; the motion passed unanimously. [Since the meeting, Millager has created a blog on Blogger.com, which is now part of the Googleplex. The blog is [Partners Intercom](http://partners-intercom.blogspot.com). Its address is <http://partners-intercom.blogspot.com>. He invites all to visit the site.

Vena noted that the convention probably would stay within budget. He said "we've been given signals" that any leftover funding would go to the chapter and that "no Arkansas money will be expended."

Heily proposed that the chapter's consideration of adding a Bolivian student to the board be tabled until the January meeting. No objections were raised. Archiving the chapter's papers was also tabled until the next meeting. No opposition was voiced.

Neuse summarized officers and chairs. Chairs continuing in their positions include Millager, Taylor, Kaminsky, Vena and Agriculture Chair John Goodwin. Mark Robertson resigned as chair of the environmental committee. Lancaster remained as chair of Democratic Initiatives. Margaret Clark had expressed interest in returning to the board, Neuse said, possibly dealing with Women and Children. He said he wanted a small committee to study the proposed changes in bylaws that had been discussed over the last year. Millager and Lancaster agreed to serve; Heily declined. Taylor took the third slot.

Neuse noted that a fiesta for the two Bolivian visitors would be at 7:15 p.m. Monday in Fayetteville.

Frans asked what the chapter should do about Cobija and Riberalta. Ybarnegaray asked for money to hire staff for the Bolivian chapter. Taylor thanked Heily for her two years of service as president.

The next board meeting will be Jan. 14, 2006 (in Russellville).

The meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

Attachments:

1. Agenda 11/13/2005.
2. Membership list
3. Quarterly Income and Expenses, Arkansas-East Bolivia Partners of the Americas