

Board Meeting Minutes

The Vancouver Life Drawing Society

Monday June 29, 2015; Campagnolo's Restaurant on Main Street

Attending:

Alain Boullard (Member-at-large & Model Coordinator),
Randal Cullen (Vice-President),
Nicholas Jackiw (Treasurer),
Erica Pratt (Guest, candidate for open Secretary position),
Douglas Smardon (President)

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:20pm, with Nick volunteering to act as Secretary since our Secretary position is again open.

Standing Items:

1. The minutes of the March 30, 2015 Board Meeting were unanimously approved.
2. Nick reported on Society financials through April 2015, the latest reported month. In April the Society lost \$1,470, and is down \$1,000 for the year to date. Nick identified the bulk of this loss to unrealized membership sales—the Society has sold \$1,000 less memberships than in the same period last year. Basic may see this number rebound with May's numbers (since May is the traditional month of most renewals), but discussion returned to the AGM's recent focus on ways to encourage member renewals.

A motion was made for the Treasurer to work with the Membership Coordinator to generate a list of recently expired memberships, and to work with the Board on direct mailings and studio postings encouraging recently expired members to renew. The motion passed unanimously.

A further motion to accept this financial report passed unanimously.

3. Randal reported on the status of our TD investments. He has sold \$5,000 of stock to hold as cash for funding the AGM-approved student bursary (see Old Business, below). Otherwise the investments continue as previously.
4. Randal reported on studio rentals, of which we've had none recently. All of the members who've previously rented our studio outside session hours to hold courses now run their instruction in their own independent studios. Discussion ensued about the wisdom of advertising studio availability more widely, with the advantage being potential rental revenue and the disadvantage the general risk of renting a studio with

diverse, relatively unsecured and uncounted, valuable property inside it. No great ideas emerged—we are in need of a seriously-considered proposal here—beyond **encouraging members to remember the studio is available to them to rent as public space, for rates competitive with those of community center meeting rooms and Craigslist’ by-the-hour photography studios.**

5. Reporting on models, Alain raised the possibility of installing some hooks near the stage (on the cement column and/or ceiling), so that models could adopt poses that involved pulling ropes or suspending an elevated limb for long periods in a sash or a sling. (The current string hanging from the lighting apparatus is neither safe nor functional in this regard: it’s too thin, and cuts off one’s circulation over time when used to suspend an arm.) Discussion ensued with the Board excited about the possibility of extending pose repertoire but concerned about model safety.

A motion was unanimously passed for the Model Coordinator to purchase some heavier cotton rope and provisionally install it, tied to the cement column, for pulling poses; and to use it to explore the viability of more permanently installed hook or pulley system.

Old Business:

The Board heard updates on the following Old Business:

6. The Board wishes to pass on their appreciation of our last Secretary Anastasia Andrianova. The Secretary position is once again open.
7. The recent studio lighting and lighting curtain improvements are now complete. The Board again thanks James Caesar for his tremendous contribution organizing and executing these improvements.
8. In July, Randal will work with Emily Carr University of Art and Design to fund our recently-approved Student Bursary. The name of this Bursary will be negotiated with Emily Carr according to their naming guidelines, and (ideally) will reflect both “Basic Inquiry” as the funding organization and W. L. Davis, whose generous bequest to the Society gave rise to the original idea and initial funding for the student bursary.

New Business:

9. Alain reported on the Special Monday Night Sessions for the Rosario Flamenco 30 Year Anniversary Show. Two such sessions have been organized, the first of which had excellent attendance and considerable participation from the local Urban Sketchers group. Doug reports that Merry Meredith is volunteering to coordinate the show, and has that well in hand procedurally. **Members interested in more information about the show should contact Merry directly at mbmeredith@gmail.com or await further public announcements.**
10. Doug reports that he has been unsuccessful in connecting a recommendation for HVAC service reported by a session manager from an alleged, itinerant, City-subcontracting HVAC technician to an actual landlord authorization to perform that service. In the future, if our landlord wants to service our HVAC, they can inform us

of that directly rather than through their alleged itinerant subcontractors; and if meanwhile our HVAC fails conspicuously, we can pursue that directly with our landlord.

11. Nick reports that the Society's D&O and B&C 2015 insurance renewals are now complete.
12. Doug reports that the Society's AGM was successfully held on May 9, 2015, and is documented in separate minutes.
13. Alain reports that following AGM discussion on ways to revitalize our gallery, at this point there is no proposal forthcoming from membership for a Gallery Committee and so no further action anticipated on this front.
14. Randal reports that he will pursue in July the AGM charter to make storage slots (above the sink wall) available for annual rental to members on a first-come, first-serve basis. **Members currently using these storage slots should vacate them by the end of June; members interested in securing a paid rental spot should contact Randal at rdcullen@yahoo.ca.**
15. Given variability of session managers' orientation of new models to their first sessions, a motion was unanimously passed to create a (written) New Model Orientation FAQ as a resource for new models and session managers alike. Nick will create a first pass of such a FAQ for circulation to the Board and Session Managers.
16. The Board briefly discussed perceived inadequacies of the current model platform/stage. While it seems appropriate for seated or reclining poses, many members find the stage too tall for standing poses, elevating the model far above the line of sight of seated artists and even occasionally of standing ones. At the same time, it is large enough—and sufficiently encumbered by its large under-storage drawer—that wheeling it in and out of the model area as poses evolved during a session is impractical. Basic might benefit from a more portable, smaller stage for such poses, and for better support for poses “from the floor” rather than “from the stage” especially in uncrowded sessions (e.g. with a padded floor mat). With no specific proposals forthcoming, this remains an area for consideration. Meanwhile, **session managers are encouraged, where appropriate and interested, to work with their models to experiment with floor-based standing poses** and to pass on any suggestions for more versatile posing arrangements.
17. Alain reported on various requests from members to photograph models at the end of poses despite the Society's posted policy that **NO PHOTOGRAPHS OF MODELS ARE PERMITTED**, regardless of whether they are clothed and whether they agree to be photographed. Spirited discussion followed in which it was pointed out that the Society's volunteers themselves violate this policy when Facebook administrators post pictures of models to our Facebook page, or when session coordinators take photographs of models at the end of long-poses to help them return to that pose in a subsequent session.

The Board revisited its policy and elected not to change it. While recognizing that there are many legitimate contexts for photographing models, and while recognizing

that members and volunteers' intentions may be completely noble and appropriate, our policy reflects a measured response to abundant and conspicuous risks in the era of digital images. In a world in which society's members private e-mail and telephone accounts are occasionally hacked by malicious parties and programs, and in which members' private digital storage facilities (like Dropbox, iCloud, Google Drive, "private" Facebook, etc.) appear in headlines as subjects of large-scale security breaches, and most importantly in which nude digital photographs of people taken with consent and in private circumstances then routinely circulate publicly, forever, without the photographed party's permission and to their tremendous personal and professional detriment, VLDS wants in no way to facilitate the creation or circulation of digital photographs of its models—consenting or not, clothed or not.

Members wishing to photograph models are encouraged to make private arrangements outside of drawing sessions with their models. Models considering consenting to private photographs are encouraged to educate themselves about long-term risks, and both parties are encouraged to protect themselves with well-executed Photo Model Consent and Release contracts outlining rights and legal responsibilities. Session managers wishing to document poses photographically are discouraged from doing so, and where that discouragement fails, to do so only using models' own personal cameras so that models remain in exclusive possession of those images. Failing that, managers should rely on taping and pose-reconstruction from previous sessions' drawings and paintings rather than by photographs.

Finally, Alain requests that Photo Policy information be refreshed in Studio Signage, the Session Manager handbook, and on our proposed new model FAQ.

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 9:08pm.