

Northwest Editors Guild

Minutes for Board Meeting on August 11, 2025

Approved by (8 attendees): AMJ, JP, AD, LLB

Absent or Admin (1): JG

Location: Online (Zoom)

The meeting was recorded, and the recording is available on the Guild Drive.

Attendees

- Board Members (8): Julia Anderson, Laura Lee Bennett, Alexandra DuSablón, David Hicks, Abby Marshall Jaworski, Travis Mealand, Joann Peterson, Nadia Riell

Quorum: Yes (4 required)

- Admin: Jen Grogan
- Absent: Barbara Merchant
- Guests: None

Preliminaries – David Hicks

- Call to order at 6:30 pm
- Welcome any guest attendees
- Three items added to beginning of consent agenda

Updates from the Administrator – Jen Grogan

- Membership Report

- o 48 new memberships have joined so far this year, and 6 members have renewed after a gap. Otherwise ticking along as usual.
- Website and Newsletter Report
 - o Recent traffic focused on Red Pencil pages as well as “Find an Editor” pages and membership application—all exactly what we want!
 - o Nice high spike (75% open and 20% click) for the July newsletter, timed with the opening of Red Pencil registration.
 - o We now get more traffic to the website from Bluesky than from Instagram and Reddit put together.
 - o The blog post on the ergonomics of armrests for short people continues to be an immensely successful, evergreen post. Next highest post so far this year is *What’s In Store for Red Pencil 2025?*, so exactly what we want.
- **Member Complaint Received:** I received a complaint through our form regarding our member meeting of last March about antisemitism, as it relates to Israel’s attacks and blocking of humanitarian aid in Gaza. The full text of the complaint is available here. Please note that I have temporarily removed the complainant’s name and contact info from the text, but it is a member of some years’ standing, and I have replied directly to the member notifying them that I’ve received their complaint and will bring it to the board’s attention.
 - o Travis and Kristine will contact the complainant to discuss their thoughts on next steps and offer of resources, and offer for them to attend our next DEI committee meeting.
 - o Options might include removing the video or perhaps just the Q&A section where more of the complaint is focused.
 - o Tabled vote on any action until end of meeting, as two members will join this meeting late.
- **Belated addition (8/10):** One more thing on the subject of the conference: Jess Stampe (<https://justaskjess.work/>) who is already presenting for Red Pencil (Title: The Editor’s Toolkit) contacted Jill and I with the offer to do photography at the event. I’d love to take her up on this so I have more photos for the website, newsletter, etc. Since she’s already attending the conference as a presenter, could we offer her a free year of membership in exchange for the photography? I can write up a contract with Jess (maybe with Jill’s help, since our socials would also benefit from new photos), I just need board approval on the free year of membership.

Vote: unanimous approval.

Treasurer Report (10 minutes) - Julia Anderson

- Everything is going well. Nothing to report.

BREAK! (5 minutes)

Committee Updates

What's new? What are you planning? What do you need from the board?

Board Development – Abby

- I will be checking in with everyone in the next couple of weeks. Please think about how your board service is going so far and if there is anything you need. Those of you whose board term is up at the end of 2025, please think about whether you'd like to remain on the board next year. I'll need a definitive answer soon, as we're ramping up on board recruitment for 2026. And those of you staying on through 2026, please think about whether you'd like to make any changes to your board service.
- Board recruitment will be in full swing very soon. All board members: Please network with other Guild members, inform others of how fun it is to be on the Guild board, and let me or David know of anyone who might be interested in joining our board (or volunteering on a committee). We'll be setting up recruitment happy hours soon, so keep an eye on the Guild calendar for those, and let anyone interested know about those as well.
- My role (VP of Board Development) will be available next year, so any board members not currently in charge of a committee, please think about whether you'd be willing to take this on. I'd be happy to discuss what the role involves with anyone interested. (David - what other roles are we certain we will need to fill for next year?)
- Regarding the consent agenda, please make sure to fill out your section by end of day the Friday before the meeting so that everyone has a chance to review your updates before the Monday meeting. (I wanted to review this on Saturday, but there were a number of blank sections still.) Thank you!

Communications – Joann

- Two new blog posts in July:
 - Red Pencil Is for Every Type of Editor
 - The Editing Field from an International Perspective: An Interview with Aisha “Ash P” Panjwaneey
- Social Media Report from Jill: overview: Red Pencil and StetPet content performing well. StetPet’s 8th birthday was in late July.
- Jill is planning to resurrect *Giant Pencil’s Pre-Red Pencil Virtual Trivia Night* again in October. Potential dates of the event would be the evening of Oct. 24 or Oct. 30. It needs to be at least a week before the conference so we don’t lose attendees to travel, but Halloween is the Friday before the conference. I want to charge \$5 admission, from which the proceeds would go to either the Red Pencil scholarship fund and/or would pay for the Giant Pencil cardboard cutout (see below). I’ve already recruited volunteers to help with the event and am soliciting questions and prize contributions from RP presenters and others in the editing community (all virtual prizes this time). Nothing the board needs to do for this other than attend and help promote the event when I finalize a date. If you *want* to help in any way, please contact Jill
- Two requests from Jill:
 - I want to order a 6-ft-tall cardboard cutout of Giant Pencil for my planned Giant Pencil photo booth at Red Pencil. The cost will be around \$100-125 and this is something we can reuse at other future events that will bring us positive attention. The other option was a custom-printed background with stand, which would cost \$300-500 and would likely not be able to be reused.
 - Discussed options like a reusable banner with stand
 - Needs to be reusable, not branded for the conference
 - Could be paid from the Communications budget, as well as the below request – Joann can approve

- I also want to order StetPet/Giant Pencil business cards (StetPet info on one side, Giant Pencil info on the other, both linking to Guild website) before Red Pencil. The board approved this idea in early 2020, but it never came to be due to the pandemic. We can also use these cards at Guild tabling events and give to board members/key volunteers to hand out at other editing conferences. Previously had these printed at Costco, but will need to get quote for current pricing.

DEI – Travis

- Member Meeting on “Authenticity Reading” by Brittany Yost planned for September 8th (6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Pacific time)
- Still working on content for the DEI section of the website (inserting links for videos).
- Will need the DEI statement for the webpage reviewed by the board (sorry I didn’t update this on Friday, but it’s super short. You can find it at the top of the page, titled “Introductory Statement”. I used language that has been discussed throughout DEI committee meetings and used on various Guild documents.)

Outreach – Laura Lee

- Willamette Writers Conference: July 30–August 3, 2025, Crowne Plaza Hotel in Portland, OR. NWEA applied to be a Schedule Sponsor (\$100) and an Exhibitor at Writer’s Fair (August 1, 5–7 pm; cost is \$30). We submitted a B/W business card-size ad and we received an ad to post on the Guild social/site. Alexandra DuSablón supplied a Red Pencil flyer tailored to the event, and Julia Anderson and I arranged to meet at the Belmont Ballroom to table together. I had planned to drive down to Portland Friday morning August 1. I was bringing all the tabling supplies—banner, printed materials (brochures, etc.), plus Red Pencil guy—and Julia was bringing her tablet to show off the Guild website—and chocolates. Unfortunately, despite an early start from Redmond, WA, there was horrific traffic on I-5 South, from an earlier collision that morning. After 5 hours on the road, we still hadn’t reached Olympia! So we turned back. Very disappointing.

LESSON LEARNED: Portland Guild members/volunteers should support Portland events, and Seattle folks do Seattle events.

Fortunately, Julia saved the day—despite having no printed materials! She had her tablet to show off the Guild’s website—and chocolates! Apparently there was great interest in the Guild’s offerings.

- Julia’s report on the Writer’s Fair (shared with her permission):

It went really well! We had a ton of writers interested. I also found some writing associations who seemed interested in maybe having some kind of partnership or connection with the guild: Willamette Writers, Rose City Romance Writers, and Rogue Writers Collective. Looks like I might do a speaking event for the Rose City Romance Writers group. I did show people the website as well. I actually grabbed pencil and paper from the front desk so I could try to count numbers, but I had so many who kept coming in while I was still talking to someone that I just had no opportunity to scratch down numbers. I estimate that in the two hours I was there, I had about two or three minutes where I wasn't actively in conversation with someone. Quite literally. I had people come up to talk to me as soon as I had my bag down on our table and was in conversation while I set it up with candy and the tablet, and I didn't have a chance to pause to send a text until fifty minutes in. I had a guy talking to me about us as I cleared the table, too! The interest was intense, and that was with nothing at our table to draw people in!

We have got to do it again, and I think we should try to do multiple days next time. This could be bigger than the Portland Book Festival for us if we hit it right. More writers conferences for sure!

- Clarion West and NWEW cross-promotion: Discussion ongoing to coordinate the exchange of ads for both organizations—that is, promo copy and logos—to post for Clarion West "Deep Dive" event on Oct. 22 and NWEW Red Pencil conference Nov. 8. Keep the exchange fair! TO DO: LLB reach out in August.
- PNWA Fall Conference: September 11–14, 2025, DoubleTree by Hilton Seattle Airport. Sign up as Exhibitor for *at least* two days. TO DO: LLB reach out in August.

Programming – Joann

- See Brittany Yost comment on the DEI section.

Red Pencil – Alexandra

- Registration update as of 8/11: 72 total registrations, 55 in-person attendees
This is lower than in the past, but we have more time to go before the event than past conferences on tighter schedules. Also we may get a lot more online attendees with future advertising.
- Early-bird registration will end 9/15!
- Affiliate codes have been sent out to: Editors Canada, ACES, Editors Tea Club, Magazine Editors Chat Group, UW editing certificate, Portland State Univ grad program, Editcetera, ASBPE, Bay Area Editors' Forum, and Editors of Color; no response yet from EFA, SD/PEN, and SDWEG.
- Program is up online, but I'm still working through the layout and AV plan with the venue, so the schedule won't be out until that's done (that includes the sessions that will be recorded and/or live streamed).
- Please keep helping us promote and spread the word!
- Documentary screening folks could not find a location in November, so it won't be an official part of the conference.
- Julia: Willamette Writers have quite a few editor members, Julia will find contact info for Alexandra.

Further Discussion on Member Complaint

- Take video down, or put a longer disclaimer, or edit the Q&A section out of the video?
- Does this video provide useful education for members? Or do its problems override that? (16 people have viewed it since March 2024.)
- The description on our website is accurate about the content, but the Q&A section not as much.
- Jen could fairly quickly edit out the Q&A.
- Whatever we choose could start a precedent for the future.
- We could also have a professional DEI specialist review it and any decisions.
- We should consider updating the Presenter Agreement to make sure the instructions are appropriate in relation to sharing personal opinions, political stances, etc.
- Postpone this vote until after the DEI committee contacts the person who complained to discuss their expectations.

Closing Items

Action items

- **Travis, Laura Lee, and Kristine** will contact the complainant to discuss their thoughts on next steps and offer of resources, and offer for them to attend our next DEI committee meeting.
- **Abby** to contact the rest of the board to confirm who is continuing on the board and possibly willing to fill Executive Committee roles.
- **Laura Lee** to contact Clarion West in August to discuss cross-promotion.
- **Laura Lee** to contact PNWA Fall Conference in August.
- **Julia** will find contact info for Alexandra for Willamette Writers to share conference advertising.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Date and time of next meeting: Monday, October 13, 2025, at 6:30 pm