

SIBA annual meeting, Savannah 2016

President Jill Hendrix welcomed everyone and began the meeting with the roll call. Tom of Octavia Books won with his rousing shout, "Stella!"

Jill introduced the board, then thanked show sponsors for their generosity.

Jill reviewed last year's minutes. Jamie Fiocco of Flyleaf motioned to accept the minutes, the motion seconded (person not visible to me).

Jill discussed the State of SIBA. It is in solid fiscal shape, trade show attendance is up, core membership up, 20% increase in Abacus participation, online traffic at SIBA website up, Board membership stable.

Jill informed membership of Board's attendance at the KLC You. Lead. Now Leadership training in August. SIBA will give a scholarship related to KLC, more details to follow.

The Owner Manager survey revealed that increasing profit margins and hosting big author events were the most notable priorities for core members. She mentioned this as part of the reason for the change in the SIBA trade show from a fall to a spring schedule, based in Atlanta at the Gift Mart. Booksellers could take advantage of the higher margins of sidelines and remainders. Jill began the town hall part of the meeting, asking members to bring forward any concerns or suggestions.

Sally Brewster stated that such a fundamental shift in the show should have been voted on by the membership. Jill suggested flexibility of approach, and that SIBA could return to the way the shows are scheduled now if this experiment doesn't work out, is not embraced by membership or vendors.

Janet of the Muse Bookshop felt members didn't have a vote and should have. Kelly Justice suggested that SIBA and her staff did not do enough information gathering, that the shift was not well-communicated and she was blindsided. She likes shows moving around to different cities. She said publishers are negative about the new format for 2018. Doug said there was financial assistance for booksellers to work through the transition. Jill mentioned that the timing of current show hurts others and that there were voices supporting the transition that were not being heard at the meeting.

Jamie Fiocco was concerned that the change might hurt our relationships with publishers. Tom of Octavia shared concerns of those who spoke before him and wants SIBA to make sure the flavor of the show stays on new books.

Wanda addressed concerns about how the news was dropped on the membership. She said the Board approved of the shift, as did all publishers except one. Many publishers felt the change was a great idea. She said that many members have been asking for years that the show be centrally located and they can never attend in the fall. She researched and thought through this move. She will look at what we need to build a great show.

Pam French of BINC spoke. It is their 20th anniversary. Ann Patchett and James Patterson are this year's ambassadors. She mentioned the piggybank fundraiser, ice cream social at 3pm on Saturday, and how SIBA stepped up as a show to support them. She also mentioned the flashing turtle fundraiser, encouraging booksellers to support BINC with purchases.

Oren Teicher of ABA discussed an indie resurgence. ABA membership has grown. WI registration almost sold out. He appealed to members to take advantage of publisher specials associated with Small Business Saturday. He supports change and innovation and urged SIBA members to consider that when thinking of the trade show change in date and location.

Meeting adjourned.