



AgX Meeting
Saturday, December 19, 2015, 1:00 PM
AgX Space
144 Moody Street, Waltham

Present:

Alex Bickford
Bryan Papciak (beginning)
Douglas Urbank
Ethan Berry
Genevieve Carmel
Isaac Fuhrman
Michelle Finn
Mike Piso

Morgan Hoyle-Combs
Nic Brynolfson
Robert Todd
Sarah Bliss
Stefan Grabowski
Susan DeLeo

AGENDA

Budget & Finance Update
5-Year Lease Proposal
Fundraiser Campaign Recap
Fundraiser Perk Delivery
Darkroom/Lab Buildout Update
Membership Definition/Core List-serve
Equipment Donations

OTHER ITEMS

Liability
Insurance
Contacts
Outreach & Website Update
FilmLabs Conference
Firehouse Space, Brooklyn
Salem Film Fest Opportunity
City Feed and Supply Book Signing Opportunity

INTRODUCTIONS

The group welcomed Sarah Bliss and Alex Bickford, attending meetings for the first time, and the rest of us introduced ourselves.

BUDGET & FINANCE UPDATE & 5-YEAR LEASE PROPOSAL

Doug reported that we were able to pay our rent reasonably early this month (December 8) and the expenses soon after that. To date we have only been able to collect enough each month to cover rent and utilities because some members are contributing in excess of \$67.

Doug reported that Susan Murphy, our property manager, has proposed a 5-year lease beginning January 1 at an increased rent of \$1,800. At year 3 it would increase to \$1,860. In email correspondence Susan stated that they usually don't have a problem with the 5-year lease because there are others within the community willing to take over if a tenant can't continue. Stefan reported that Imagivision may be interested in taking over the lease at some point. The group discussed pros and cons of a 5-year lease and agreed it was in our interest to commit to that term. Doug questioned why they would see a need to raise our rent considering that we have rented back space that Handcranked gave up. Ethan suggested that we've improved the space and are bringing new people to the Waltham Mills community. Bryan reported that all rents had been raised across the board and that artists in the building intend to fight the increase, which he said is typical. He also described Susan as "very reasonable." There was disagreement about whether to make a counter-proposal to stick with the current rent or to simply accept the small increase. Those in favor of negotiating the rent made a small majority. Bryan has agreed to meet with Susan—if possible given his schedule—this week to try to negotiate a lower rent.

MEMBERSHIP DEFINITION/CORE LIST-SERVE

Gen reviewed the results of the meeting on membership definition which she organized, attended by Mike, Frank and Doug, and distributed a draft income and expense worksheet including proposed dues levels. The rough estimate is that AgX might have \$30,000 in annual costs. Gen suggested that we plan to use the Indiegogo funds to help pay half the rent as needed over the next 6 months while pursuing expanded membership using new dues levels. Stefan said that at our current fundraising level, we will receive \$9,866, the balance going to Indiegogo. We will probably receive a check in a few weeks and then any additional donations will come to us later. The group debated the proposals from the membership meeting and Gen's suggestion at length. Grant funds to fill gaps were discussed and Rob mentioned the Boston Cultural Council development grant of \$5,000 which AgX should pursue.

Ethan recommended that we keep the dues process as simple as possible and, based on his experience with the BFVF, suggested that a large membership creates responsibilities which may be undesirable. Ethan also suggested that AgX's emphasis be on relationships between members rather than on "transactions." Stefan argued for keeping the process as inclusive as possible, including allowing flexibility for those who can't afford even the lowest dues level. Gen also talked about our structure reflecting our shared values of inclusivity and affordability. Consideration of a separate student level was discussed and dismissed, in favor of a lower level for anyone who can't afford the basic dues amount. Consideration of a lab vs. no-lab membership was also discussed and dismissed, in favor of seeing membership in AgX as supporting the whole, collectively. Sarah proposed posting membership benefits and responsibilities on our website for review by any interested party. She suggested, as a first-time visitor, that AgX is an impressive group, that what we've accomplished presents a great opportunity, and that we should understand and appreciate that.

The group agreed on two membership levels: a basic level and a lower level for those who cannot pay the basic level. Nic proposed polling current attendees to see who would commit to the basic level, and a large majority can. Gen will create a Google doc by Monday to outline membership benefits and responsibilities and present dues levels, and to serve as a membership application. The aim will be to establish clear membership in AgX as distinguished from general interest parties on our list-serve. A core list-serve will be established for members. The general list-serve will post public interest information such as public workshops and screenings.

OUTREACH & WEBSITE UPDATE

The website was discussed briefly. Frank, who was unable to attend the meeting, is now the only member working on our website. The AgX site will be important for promoting membership. Stefan reported that he had created a separate Vimeo page for AgX (<https://vimeo.com/agxfilm>).

FUNDRAISER PERK DELIVERY

Ethan said that he was prepared to begin silkscreening t-shirts and tote bags in mid-January and that this could be a fun group effort. He has purchased 36 t-shirts, both gray and white, which—in addition to fulfilling fundraiser obligations—could be sold at screenings. Rob recommended looking into AgX signage for the exterior of the building. Stefan said that given the minimal number of contributions toward AgX DVDs that he would author and produce them in-house. Nic volunteered that he has access to a Rimage duplicator. Isaac will follow up on Cabinet magazine perk, Brittany may be able to take care of HFA, and Doug will take care of the silkscreen prints. Stefan, who has been in contact with the individual donors, said he's willing to follow up on the other items.

EQUIPMENT DONATIONS

Stefan announced that Kevin Rice would like to orchestrate delivery of Process Reversal donated equipment—including an Oxberry optical printer and a Model C contact printer—between February 8 and 14. Kevin thinks we can accomplish delivery, installation, training and a workshop during that timeframe. Kevin would most likely be coming from Los Angeles to Boston at which point we'd rent a truck with a lift and make the round trip to Pennsylvania with the equipment. The group agreed that AgX would fund Kevin's flight. We have also been offered an Oxberry animation stand by Harvard University which could be collected at that time. There was some minimal discussion on whether we were in a position to accept the donation, and the group agreed that we should.

DARKROOM/LAB BUILDOUT UPDATE

Ethan reported that Tuesday's inaugural workshop was a success. There are still some light leaks that should be addressed, but the results were good. His darkroom receipts for materials to date total \$740. He suggests we aim for a workshop in January.

MISCELLANEOUS

The group discussed possible AgX film and music events including Frank's band, Thalia Zedek, and Animal Hospital. These could be ways to raise a little additional income.

Stefan suggested investing in some super 8 materials such as leader and reels.

Stefan would like to run a Film 101 or Boot Camp orientation, possibly for members only, including Bolex loading, filming, processing, splicing, flatbed editing.

Doug reviewed the offer from Sandra of the The Firehouse Space. Nic suggested we should hold off until we have a group of films created at AgX.

Ethan and Gen reviewed the Salem Film Fest Opportunity. The festival is about 8 years old and occurs in early March. It is documentary only and video only, but includes 1 to 2 minute "bumper" sketches about Salem, which are repeated 3 to 4 times during the festival. Jeff Schmidt asked Gen if AgX would be interested in participating. Ethan said that invitations are hard to come by and he would like to work with the group to participate by producing a short that would originate in film and promote AgX.

NEXT MEETING & OTHER SCHEDULING

The next AgX meeting was scheduled for Saturday, January 16 at 1:00 PM at AgX in Waltham.

The next work-in-progress screening will be organized by Susan and is set for Sunday, January 10, from 3 - 7:00 PM. In our previous meeting Valery said she will organize a February work-in-progress screening, date to be determined.

Ethan would like to organize a silkscreening party in mid-January to produce fundraiser perks.

Kevin Rice visit and equipment donation is tentatively scheduled around February 8 to 14.

The group set a goal for a public workshop in late February.

End of Meeting Notes
Notes by Douglas Urbank