

National Storytelling Network
February 2026 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
storynet.org/about-nsn/board-meeting-information/
Thursday, February 19th, 2026 • 5:30–7:30 pm Central Time

I. Call to Order

Chair Rishi Nixon

Karin Amano, Melissa Fees, Caleb Hubbard, Rishi Nixon, Claire Nolan, Margaret Read MacDonald, Barry McWilliams, Lisa Overholzer, Delanna Reed, Darlene Richard, Emily Stamets, Linda Yemoto. Staff: Dot Cleveland. Conference Co-Chair, Trudy Hanson.

Meeting opened at 5:36 pm. CST.

II. Review and Approval of December 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Secretary Margaret Read MacDonald

Motion: That the minutes of the December 2025 Board Meeting be approved.

Moved by Rishi Nixon. Passed unanimously.

III. Chair's Report

Chair Rishi Nixon

- Emily Stamets was appointed as Board Rep to Oracle Awards Committee
- Dot needs volunteers to test conference registration. Karen, Margaret, Linda, Rishi, Caleb, and Trudy will volunteer.
- Rishi working on schedules for board meetings. Monday afternoon and Thursday evenings alternating.
- Policy on scheduling needed. The chair should reschedule the meetings as needed. One meeting should be in evening, considering Pacific Time Zone.
- Thanks to Delanna for getting Member Grants program launched. \$11,000 plus in fund.
- Thanks to Kate Dudding and Marilyn McPhie for work on auction each year. Auction opens on Monday.
- Nominating Committee 7 board members have term up. Trudy is nominating committee chair. Thanks to three board members who are leaving the board: Lisa Overholser chaired PRO, chaired Finance Committee, launched Peer Consulting Program, launched Nancy Duncan Conference Scholarship, led creation of PRO Event Production Guide. Barry Mc Williams co-chaired PRO, wrote restructuring article for newsletter, worked as liaison with Seattle Guild for conference. Lisa Williams rescued SIO, which would have vanished without her leadership. Reached internationally for SIO participation. Linda Yemoto and Margaret Read MacDonald will serve another partial term, but will resign after one or two years, to stagger the oncoming board members. Rishi will remain on board for another term.

Call for Committee Members: Membership and Grant writing

Chair Rishi Nixon

Grant Writing Committee and Membership Committee need board rep. Committee members being brought on. Darlene Richard will volunteer for one. Grant Writing Committee will be asked to apply for Literary Arts Fund grant. Membership Committee needs to increase membership. We have only 300+ members, yet conferences have drawn 200.

Treasurer's Report

Dot Cleveland

Report available on NSN website.

Scholarship grants \$4600 Member Grants \$11,277.

Total Liabilities and Equity \$238,566. \$40,000 of that is SIG monies.

\$1,000 donation from Judith Alexander.

Teller Page: members not making full use of this.

Member directory is being rebuilt.

Dot can do registrations herself now, saving us money.

VI. Vote on Amendment to ORACLE Committee Bylaws Charter Bylaws Committee Chair Margaret Read MacDonald Tabled.

Conference Report. Caleb Hubbard and Trudy Hanson.

- Registration is being tested. Schedule set.
- Story swaps are held on Saturday during the day. (During ECO field trip)
- Story Slam moved up in schedule.
- Bonfire receptions planned.
- SIGS can meet before lunch in assigned rooms.
- Tables in lobby available for SIGS.
- New membership meeting planned to bring new members up to speed on NSN benefits.
- ECO Field trip will cost only \$8. Trudy Hanson is contributing to the cost of the bus. Saturday at 8:30 bus leaves. Park Ranger will lead tour.
- Bookstore and Auction to be in same space, with dedicated managers for each.
- National Tellers: Sheila Arnold, Pippa White, Adam Mellema, Laura Simms, Willy Claflin, MC Michael Brundy.
- Regional Tellers: Eldrena Douma, Fran Stalling, Dee Cee Cornish, Juba May, Paula Schlegel, Chester Weems, Darlene Richard MC
- Discount to be offered for combination Tejas and NSN conferences. Tejas Conference will be via Zoom March 12-15.

VII. Discussion on Supporting Dot and Bob Chair Rishi Nixon

Document showing Dot's duties shared. Looking for ways to take some work off of Dot's shoulders. And planning ways to fund this position in future.

Motion: That the Discussion on Supporting Dot and Bob be referred to the Executive Committee. Moved by Rish Nixon. Passed unanimously.

VIII. Discussion on Reconciliation with International Storytelling Center.

Chair Rishi Nixon

Crystal Hawkins and Sandy Reeves are co-directors now. Rishi will talk with them about cooperation between our organizations.

IX. Report on Member-at-Large Engagement

Director Lisa Williams. Presented by Caleb.

Motion: That we add General Storytelling Interest as a box, along with SIG. Moved by Caleb Hubbard. Passed unanimously.

X. Report on Member Grants Launch

Immediate Past Chair Delanna Reed

Flyer sent to all board members. Need to pass on the word. Applications opened on Feb 15. Closes April 30.

I would like to showcase Member Grants at Annual Meeting.

XI. Report on *NSN Remembers* Oral History Project

Immediate Past Chair Delanna Reed

- Completed first interview with Jimmy Neil's sister. Interviewing Connie Regan Blake, David Novak and Nancy Kavanaugh soon.
- Delanna will send list of names. Board members could help with interviews. Rishi and Lisa Overholser will be helping. Audio recordings.
- Linda Yemoto could interview Gay Ducey. Claire will interview Linda Yemoto. Lisa Overholser could interview Margaret.
- Share progress on this at annual meeting.

XII. Environmental Storytelling Special Interest Group (ECO SIG) Report

Directors Linda Yemoto and Claire Nolan

Planning for ECO tour. Working on bylaws in coming year. Looking to expand board.

XIII. Producers & Organizers Special Interest Group (PRO SIG) Report

Directors Lisa Overholser and Barry McWilliams

Succession planning workshop with Ellen Munds and new executive director Ronan in May. PRO track in annual meeting. Festival 101 workshop in October. Applications for Peer Mentoring have been received.

Elsa Zuniga, board chair of NEST joined as Lifetime member. She is interested in connecting with PRO.

XIV. Storytelling in Organizations Special Interest Group (SIO SIG) Report

Director Lisa Williams Linda absent.

XV. Youth-Educators-Storytellers Special Interest Group (YES SIG) Report

Director Karin Amano

Story Lab presented by Kristin Pedemonti — Feb 26 • Story Swap hosted by Karen Golden — March 22 • We will try to hold an event every month. • Angela's Sunbrella Award application deadline is May 31. We are creating a flyer to encourage members to apply or recommend someone.

XVI. Adjournment 7:45 pm CST

Chair Rishi Nixon