

Meeting of the N.C. Open Government Coalition board of directors  
Feb. 14, 2006  
Meeting held by teleconference at 3:30 p.m.

Attending: Melanie Sill, president  
Jim Hefner, vice president  
Jordy Whichard, treasurer  
Hugh Stevens, assistant treasurer  
Sue Price Wilson, secretary

Board members: Pauletta Brown Bracy, Tom Ross and Rick Thames

Frank Barrows, executive director

Agenda items:

1. Jordy Whichard provided a financial update, which was shared with members via email. Some highlights: Membership renewals are trickling in; we'll need to put more effort into enrolling members. The coalition had a balance of \$25,518.46 as of Feb. 10, 2006.
2. The board voted unanimously to elect Beth Grace, executive director of NCPA, as a new board member to replace Bob Stiff. Grace will serve the remainder of Stiff's term. Melanie told the board that NCPA has decided to join the coalition; initial reservations appear to have been resolved, and the NCPA participation bodes well for the future.
3. Melanie asked for board volunteers to work on a membership drive after the March 13 event. Rick Thames and Sue Wilson will participate; they will be asking board members for names of individuals and organizations who should be contacted.
4. Frank Barrows updated the board on how plans are progressing for the seminar March 13 at Exploris. Two panels will highlight the morning: one on open meetings, the other on public records. Jon Buchan is working with Mark Prak and Hugh Stevens on these panels. Attorney General Roy Cooper will be the luncheon speaker. Following lunch, attendees will view a satellite feed of an event at the National Press Club, organized by the League of Women Voters and American Libraries Association, among others, called "Are We Safer in the Dark?"

Frank noted that attendance at the event will require effort by all board members, and asked that each member work to bring at least five people to the seminar. Board members attend free and should contact Becky Beach at [bbeach@newsobserver.com](mailto:bbeach@newsobserver.com) to confirm their attendance.

5. Jim Hefner updated board members on interest by Elon University and the University of North Carolina (separately) in exploring an affiliation with the coalition. Such affiliation would base the coalition on a university campus, providing a link to the educational mission many of the board members foresee as well as some logistical advantages and long-term base for the coalition. Next steps: Jim and Melanie will work with the universities to develop proposals to bring to the board.
6. Jim also briefed board members on his efforts to win substantial funding from the N.C. Association of Broadcasters for the coalition. The NCAB meets April 3.
7. Frank Barrows reported that he had submitted the OGC's application to the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation for \$160,000 in funding over a 24-month period to begin in September 2006. The foundation's board will make its decisions the third week in May. The grant request seeks funding to pay salary for an executive director over the two years, during which time the executive director would build the coalition's activities and visibility and secure funding, with the board's direction, for long-term sustainability.

Frank reported that he and Melanie had agreed to delay the OGC's application to the National Freedom of Information Coalition for a grant to fund web site development. Because NFOIC pays close attention to the person in charge of executing a grant-funded project, Frank and Melanie believed the coalition should wait until a permanent executive director — full time or part time — is in place.

Frank also announced that he will resign as interim executive director, more or less on the schedule anticipated upon his hiring in November 2005, to become executive director of Business North Carolina magazine. His resignation will be effective in early March. He said he planned to focus his OGC efforts in the meantime to making calls and encouraging attendance at the March 13 event.