

## Report for COUNCIL OF CONFERENCES MEETINGS: fall 2017 and spring 2018

**10/14/17**

All Star One was represented by delegate Lisa Gresser and Beth Corsa. Pam Pierce was also in attendance.

20 people, not including Joe Watts, Ally Miner, and Justina Maji, were in attendance from LOAS 1 and 2, Arts, AS 1 and 2, Star Gathering 1 and 2, Natural History, LRE, IA, and Pel Reunion.

Joe Watts was off Island for most of the summer 2017 vacationing with his family in Eastern Europe and The UK. He thanked Dave Boynton for stepping in while he was gone. "David did a spectacular job. I owe him a debt of gratitude and Patty volunteered all summer."

Joe reported that 4000 bed nights for 2017 was attributed to personal retreaters. Though we were slightly under the budgeted goal of bed nights of 20,350 with 20,250 actual bed nights, this was still an all time high. We had 19,986 bed nights in 2016. The large enrollment for the 2017 summer contributed to being able to invest a large amount of money in the Island infrastructure. These projects included Oceanic 2nd floor bathroom, the Summer House and the Kiddie Barn major renovation, and Vaughn Cottage which is complete with a climate controlled room. Lois Williams will be unveiling the educational panels in Brookfield at some point in the future. There was a focus on improving accessibility for people with mobility issues by improving the Chapel path and adding ramps. The Island will continue to work to improve accessibility. There were electrical upgrades and fire safety improvements. Future projects planned include the Shack and the Shack deck renovation, the tower by the truck tressel (alcove of lobby), Brookfield renovations and expansion, and a new state of the art Water Reclamation Project (formerly the Wastewater Treatment Facility) which they hope to have online in the fall of 2019.

There were more off Island events this year. The Regatta "Fogatta" was still a success. Starry Night on Nov 18th was still looking for sponsors for businesses.

The permanent trust (endowment) was at an all time high of 4.3 million.

The Island is working to improve marketing and outreach and is working on a promotional video (The video is now complete and terrific! Check it out on the [starisland.org](http://starisland.org) website.) The Island is replacing the Canadian flag with a new Rainbow flag to support the values of the UU and UCC.

The Island is introducing SEA Star: Star Island's Cross-Curricular Education Program. SEA Star offers day & overnight trips: Educational Programming for Elementary and Middle School classes and Service Projects for High School and Recreational groups.

Joe mention that there was an intense focus on the Alcohol and Drug policies and their enforcement. The Island does not want to promote a culture of alcohol. They want a policy that aligns with our values. The issues is underage drinking of Pels and conferees as well as the problem of providing alcohol to minors. This is a high priority for SIC. The Island has been working with the Chief of Police in Rye, NH and will result in significant changes but no specifics yet.

The Island did an active shooter training with the staff (a sign of the times.)

Break out sessions: 12:45 - 2:30

First conversation: Diversity. What is diversity? How is it defined? What are our goals in promoting diversity? What do conferences have to do to accommodate diversity? Diversity is a Community Goal of the Strategic Plan for 2017 - 2020. It says, *Create a diverse and inclusive spiritual community modeled on our best selves on our best day. Live our values through hospitality within our community to each other and in our inclusive and generous reception of all guests and visitors.* Joe says that leadership needs to have diversity including the membership committee, the nominating committee, and staff. He mentioned an interesting article in the [New Yorker](#) on diversity. Joe mentioned that he was working with an HR person to do more outreach in hiring. He feels the Island needs to create a safe place for minorities before the minorities come to the island. The Pels could be a good resource for us. He is looking to conferences to see if there are any experts that can help SIC work on this. This is a conversation starter.

Second conversation: Scholarship (Financial Aid) and Fundraising. Should we have a unified language across the conferences? How do we get more people in need to apply for Financial Aid? How do we better advertise that aid is available? AS1 does the best job of letting people know and getting people to apply for aid.

**5/5/2018**

All Star One was represented by delegates Lisa Gresser and Ann Etter. Pam Pierce, Phil Pierce, Annie Stewart, Caroline Stewart, Louise Williams, and Jenny Easter were also in attendance.

Report from Joe Watts: People are happy, record enrolling, lots of volunteerism, great grants, great coverage (TV, radio, print - and some for free!) Highlighted investments in the facility include: New Water Reclamation project and the SEA Star education program.

Discussion topic: Governance of our conferences. How do we facilitate people taking roles? AS1, AS2, and LOAS have amazing engagement in leadership. But are AS1, AS2, and LOAS leadership structures too overwhelming and cumbersome? Is the best leadership model a more streamlined model?

Conferences want to understand what other conference leaderships are like. *Did someone mention Spys?* Some conferences struggle to find Chairs and their Chairs don't return. At AS1, AS2, and LOAS it is a privilege to be Chair. The leadership structures of other conference vary widely. The governance councils range from 7 members to 25 members and some have term limits and some are without.