

AOTG Membership Meeting Minutes

- DRAFT -

Monday, November 17, 6:30 p.m.

Call to Order - Gia called meeting to order at 6:29 pm

Roll Call – Janis

Directed members to the sign in attendance sheet on counter and encouraged everyone to sign in
28 members were present

Approval of Minutes from September 2025 meeting

Lorna motioned to approve the September Membership Meeting minutes, Sonja seconded.

All in favor AYE. None opposed

Treasurer's Report – Kirsty

In Kirsty's absence Janis reminded everyone that the Profit & Loss Statement for AOTG is posted in the member section of our website and updated monthly. Members should be reviewing this prior to meetings so they may ask questions or discuss.

Current balances:

MM Account \$10,989.02

Checking \$12,641.79

Petty Cash \$200

Total: \$23,830.31

Secretary's report – Janis

December schedule has been emailed and there are no extra shifts this month! Janis credited Christina Salazar for her hard work scheduling this year and shared that she has offered to continue this job next year. Applause all around! Christina spoke and asked if anyone was interested in working New Year's Day. Last year we had decided that we would close that day and if any artist wanted to work, they could volunteer to do so. Stacey Lamothe and Ann Ranlett offered to come in. There are no set hours, it is just as they wish to be there

Janis turned it over to Sonja Hamilton who spoke about her project of using her calligraphy skills to make each artist a personal name tag! The magnetic tag will carry the artist's name and medium. This was collected on the sign in sheet, and those not attending may either contact Sonja with the information or she will contact you. This is a generous gift and much appreciated. Caution! Don't lose your personalized tag, Sonja suggests keeping it in your file folder at AOTG, she stressed this is a 'one-time' offer. Thank you, Sonja!

Vice President's Report – Louise was not present

Committee Reports

- **Membership –Gia**
 - Introduced new artist Janet Becker, jewelry artist
 - In early January Denny Grossman, woodworker will be joining AOTG
 - Sadly, announced that Kimber Chin and Suzanne Himmler will leave AOTG December 31, 2025
 - We are hopeful to jury in a fine artist working in gold or silver jewelry
 - Gia announced the 2026 jurying schedule is posted on the website, with February 5th being the next opportunity

Gia addressed the question of 'why don't we have more jurying dates'. Gia assured Membership that should we need to add in more opportunities her Membership team will do so.

Another question was asked 'I was told we could not have a jeweler that works in gold because our insurance does not allow it'. We all agreed we were not aware of this distinction and do not believe there is any limitation.

- **Display** – Stacey
- Moves are scheduled between January & March. Email will go out to those artists in December. Doorway over suite A is on a 3-month retainer – if you'd like to place art there let Stacey know so she can get you on the rotation. Guideline is that one larger piece is placed there, not a collage of pieces.
- Thank Display team for all their work this year in managing space moves.
- Thanks to Darien for all his help in moving things from AOTG to our storage unit.
- Thanks to Barbie and Karen for their work on the feature wall each month. Sonja complimented everyone for the fun November feature wall – she feels we should do this feature more than once each year. Many favorable comments have been received from our customers
- Thanks to Pam for painting pedestals and all other committee members for their efforts as they are making the gallery look fantastic

- **Special Events** – Diane/Liv
 - Diane presented re: Placer Artists Tour. No information yet on our sales – some busy days some not. Competing with a lot of activity downtown but members feel favorable about the participation. Last events this year are the two Country Christmas Events here in Old Town. There will be shuttles around town to help people get here. Saturday 12/13 and 12/20 from 9-5pm. Gallery will stay open as long as it seems worthwhile. There will be musicians and snacks for people to share.
 - Huge thanks to our members that have done many, many demonstrations and staffing this year. These include Sonja; Sandy; Ann; Carrie; Gay, Lorna and Meg. The member donations of \$15 per year worked out very well, we had a surplus and this is being used to purchase the nametags.

- **Publicity** – Lorna
 - **No report to share**
 - Meg reported on the Old Town Business Association – Thanksgiving event here in Old Town on Friday and Saturday. Country Christmas, public transportation being provided. Considering cross-walk in old town. Property owners had been invited on October 30th to discuss the situation and what to do about the vacant buildings. Retail sidewalk sale 2x per year was discussed, no decision. Old Town launched a new Book Club.

- **Facilities** – Linda
 - In her absence, Janis presented for Linda
 - Reminder to PLEASE check storage closet and remove things you have stored there, Linda is continually working to keep it cleaned and fire safe.
 - Thank you to Darien for all his work moving things between the gallery and storage unit.
 - Questioned if anyone is using the K-cup coffee machine. Answer was an immediate YES!!!!
 - Membership asked if we could please have more trees to hang ornaments, we usually have 3 and this year this is just 1. Darien immediately offered to bring the trees from storage unit

Old Business

- **Shifts/Owner Ratio**

Janis shared the board has continued to look at this and feels the best solution at this point is to put every effort to keep our Artists numbers up to the maximum amount. We don't see closing one day per week (earlier consideration) and eliminating the mid-day shift (also earlier suggestion) are good options for variety of reasons previously discussed. Sonja offered that as owners of this business we should be willing and able to put in a few extra shifts each year. Our contribution for owning a business is pretty minimal and she strongly suggests we embrace the opportunity to be more involved.

Linda suggested more jurying to keep a more vital wait list and people to invite in when needed. While it is felt that having four per year is a manageable number, more can be scheduled as needed. We acknowledge the importance of building a wait list, but also realize many times those artists cannot always be invited right in if a vacancy because of the overlap of current artists. This means they could stay on the list for a period of time.

Nominations/Slate of Officers - Janis presented the Proposed Slate of Officers for 2026

President: no nomination
Vice President: Louise Bezark & Janet Becker
Treasurer: Kirsty Roberts
Secretary: Janis Quinn & Diane Tharp
Display: Stacey Lamothe
Membership: Gia Shukiar & Marsha Toms
Publicity: Michelle Magnus Brown
Facilities: Linda Whiteside
Events: Livia Kerr

Janis shared that it was difficult building a slate of officers this year, and it is something we need to talk about during 2026. Many officers have offered to stay on the board and have done so for many years – this is an important job that needs to be shared and all members of AOTG should rotate in for these jobs

Janis will email a ballot to membership on November 18th and voting will be open for 10 days or until a quorum of 66% in favor has been reached.

- **ADA - CASp inspection**
The walk through has taken place, but we information has not yet been provided
- **Insurance**
Still waiting for quotes for D&O insurance coverage
- **POS for New Member/Owners**
Some issues with assigning member IDs in the Artesian system. Reusing former initials etc., of members hat are no longer here causes issues. We cannot re-use and Doug is looking for a solution
- **Facility Lease Update**
Louise recently negotiated a very favorable 2-year lease with our landlord. Our rent increase has stayed minimal once again – with just a \$100/month increase in rent.

New Business

- **Flyers for non-gallery sponsored events**
Louise sent an email out earlier this week reminding us to not flood the counter with marketing materials. If we wish to promote an event, please place the flyers/brochures in your display space. The counter is reserved for AOTG sponsored events
- **Increased commission on sales**
Gia led Membership through a discussion of AOTG's current financial situation, where we have seen a negative drop in our account balances throughout most of 2025. The board has discussed this and are proposing how we could mitigate this trend. We have worked with our bookkeeper who has provided analysis and forecasting on several ideas. Listed below are the options we reviewed, with the first item our proposed option:
 1. Increase our commission rate from 20% to 25%. This rate is completely in line with all over galleries in our region, and keep us from having a negative cash flow each month. We share that an increase to commission has not occurred (if ever) for many years
 2. Adding 3.5 new artists. This would help solve the issue, but the reality is we do not have any space to accommodate additional artists
 3. Increase our monthly rent. This option would not be competitive to other galleries and we feel we could potentially loose artists that would not support the increase
 4. Charging clients, or even artists, for the credit card fees. Very unfavorable idea and not pursued

Membership reviewed the above ideas and questions were fielded.

A particular question asked 'why do we need to have all this money in our bank account.' The Board feels part of their responsibility is to keep Membership aware of our financial health. It is true we could do nothing, but are we comfortable watching our balances go lower month after month? If so, and this is something Membership will decide on, we could do nothing – but it is our responsibility to make Membership aware of trends and that is what we are doing.

It was also asked if we could consider increasing to 22% or 23%. Gia answered that we thought it might be best to initiate one increase rather than revisiting this in the near future. She will see that we get an analysis from the bookkeeper of what that increase scenario would look like. This information will be shared and included in the online ballot.

It is important to note that this change WILL require membership approval and that an on-line ballot will be provided for the vote. Tonight begins the 30-day review and question period prior to the vote. Questions should be directed to Janis Quinn, Secretary, who will share questions/answers with Membership throughout the next 30 days.

Also to note: If there is an increase to commission the Membership Agreement will be updated to match the language in our Operating Agreement, which is a statement that artists pay AOTG a commission on all sales, but not documenting the actual percentage rate. This language will also be included on the online ballot to gain approval for the amendment change

- **Direct Deposit**

Gia then presented the Board's proposal that, for efficiency and streamlining efforts, to go to direct deposit for the payment of commission checks. While this will only have a minimal benefit in expense, it would reduce the labor-intensive time of our bookkeeper and board members in check signing, etc., checks will be received much faster than paper checks and not the worry of stale dated checks.

Gay motioned that we move to direct deposits of commission checks, Marsha seconded.

The topic moved into discussion where several benefits were presented.

Sandy Delahanty acknowledged the benefit of checks automatically crediting bank accounts when we are out of town or country.

It was directly pointed out that this would bring us into the 21st century as direct deposit has become the normal in comparison to our antiquated system.

Lorna, reinforced it has to be **100% participation**, once we do this it is the only way commission checks can be issued.

Gia called the vote: All those in favor AYE. None opposed

Darlene then questioned our process of paying rent automatically – pointing out that this could be done by debit from a checking account rather than by credit card. She asked us to look into what the credit card transaction is costing AOTG monthly and suggesting we may want to eliminate that option to save expense. Gia will ask Kirsty for these numbers.

Announcements: Lorna questions the process of having our door keys stamped, which was something Suzanne Himmler had initiated. Gia will follow up on that endeavor and report back.

Adjournment –

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 pm
Respectfully Submitted, Janis Quinn Secretary