



# Mentor

The Newsletter of  
**Arisia, Incorporated**

Volume 32, Issue 318, April 2024  
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## About the Meeting

The next corporate meeting of Arisia, Inc. will be held on **Sunday, May 19, 2024 at 1:00 pm ET on Zoom**. The corresponding agenda will be distributed over the corp-announce email list in advance of the meeting.

The quorum for the April corporate meeting is **15**, based on 51% of the average attendance of the last three meetings  $((27+30+31)/3 \times 0.51) = 15$ .

Please submit proxies in advance by email to [corp-proxies@arisia.org](mailto:corp-proxies@arisia.org) (a mailing list which will be seen by some corporate members) and CC: the proxy holder.

## April 16, 2024 Corporate Meeting Summary

The meeting was conducted over Zoom and called to order at **7:32PM**. There were 25 members attending:

Dan Abraham  
Vivian Abraham  
Wendee Abramo  
Joseph Andelman  
E.J. Barnes  
Andrew Brockert  
Justin du Coeur  
etana  
Sabina Fecteau  
Allison Feldhusen  
Jaime Garmendia  
Rick Kovalcik  
Leet  
Henry Leong  
Ken London

Claudia Mastroianni  
Dale Meyer-Curley  
Elliott Mitchell  
Sharon Sbarsky  
Jason Schneiderman  
Kylie Selkirk  
Mike Sprague  
Ilene Tatroe  
DJ Toland  
Nightwing Whitehead

Proxies:

- Rachel Tanenhaus to Jason Schneiderman
- Regis Donovan to Claudia Mastroianni
- JB Segal to Allison Feldhusen

### **Corrections to and approval of the March 2024 Minutes:**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

### **EBoard Report:**

The hotel announcement has gone out on social media, with some positive response. Vivian asked if Arisia still has “I climbed Mount Arisia” ribbons from our last convention at the Ziggurat. Sharon thinks we may.

The EBoard has discussed clearing up the corporate website. Vivian is taking the lead, but asked for volunteers to check links, check factual information, and make sure it’s all accurate. If anyone is interested, please email! Sabina expressed interest.

### **President’s Report:**

None.

### **VPs Report:**

None.

### **Treasurer’s Report:**

None.

### **Clerk’s Report:**

None.

## **A24 Con Comm Report:**

Ilene reminded everyone to get any outstanding receipts in, so we can close the books!

## **A25 Con Comm Report:**

Team Voltron is pleased to report that since being appointed at the March Corporate meeting, we have met weekly to work on Arisia 2025. We have worked on internal communication and project management tools, created a decision log, and transitioned the team to internal emails and Arisia-specific systems. We were pleased to work with the EBoard to announce the hotel for A25 (Ziggurat/Hyatt Boston Cambridge) and confirm the date (January 2025).

To staff Arisia 2025, we are interviewing volunteers and will be reaching out to those who have expressed interest in a division soon. In embracing diversity, inclusivity, and leading with curiosity, we are approaching each division as an opportunity for any volunteer to apply. We value every volunteer who has passionately staffed divisions and/or/ areas for years and poured their heart into it. And, we value every volunteer who has a desire to lead, coach, support and grow a division or area who may not have before. Please reach out to any member of the Team or email [conchair@arisia.org](mailto:conchair@arisia.org) to apply or talk more! Yay!

A Guests of Honor survey will be emailed out after this meeting. We want YOU to help us make Arisia a truly chosen adventure, so fill out the survey and recommend someone! We welcome the addition of types of guests - want one for comics? Recommend! Want one for costuming? Recommend! The survey will be open for 2 weeks, after which the Con Chairs will review and make final decisions.

Finally, thank you for your patience and support as we work together to put on Arisia 2025. If you ever need us, email [conchair@arisia.org](mailto:conchair@arisia.org).

## **Committee Reports:**

### Corporate Inventory Control:

(Members: Rick, Ben, Skip)

New England Folk Festival Association (NEFFA) is borrowing fans from Arisia.

### Hotel Search Committee:

(Members: Vivian, phi, Ben)

The Hotel Search is done for now. The committee's last task is making sure the recent search is properly documented.

### Discord:

(Members: Justin)

Justin has enough volunteers for committee members and admins. Once everybody has been vetted we will circle up and talk. The server exists, but is currently empty. Most discussion will take place on the Discord. We do need more moderators. Send folks to Justin, who is especially seeking newer/younger volunteers.

(IRMC report moved to last)

IT:

(Members: Gail, Rick, Sharon, Nick, Ben, phi, Mike T., plus now Dan and Dale)

Rick reported a little bit of progress on switching to Google Suite, specifically tools to automate creating Google Groups. They are still debugging those processes. Dan Abraham has been added to the committee, though possibly not yet to the Google Workspace.

Postmaster:

(Sharon, Rick, Ben, phi, Mike T.)

The postmasters continue to deal with the moderation queue, triaging as appropriate. Vivian mentioned Mike Sprague's suggestion that one person from the Con Chair team be added for the year to postmaster to help with moderation, so that when Con Chair has to post things it can happen quickly. Rick agreed, and noted that they may need to be added to not only postmaster but to another mailing list, so let him know who to add, with an email to postmaster@. Sharon pointed out that within mailman, people can be on a special view just for approving messages, so they don't have to deal with all the things. So the member of Con Chair could do that. Mail from conchair@ could also be pre-approved. The Committee agreed to start with designating a member of Team Voltron to help out.

Student Contests:

(members needed)

Julia, who is the usual contact on this topic, is not present. However, Team Voltron has said they would like to see these contests happen again this year. This is a Corporate committee, and it's time to start it up. Anyone interested in being part of that work, reach out to either EBoard or Con Chair, and hopefully we can appoint a committee at the next Corporate meeting. Jaime noted that Kris Pelletier has a great deal of institutional knowledge about the student contests, and would be happy to provide it to anyone working on this Committee.

Incident Response Management Committee (IRMC):

(Vivian, etana, Nightwing, Delenn, Claudia, Jaime, Kris)

Vivian wants to step down from the IRMC, not because of actual conflict of interest, but because of possible optics. They don't know whether anyone is ready to step up and chair the IRMC.

They have concerns about how it is functioning - everyone is well-intentioned, but we're discovering flaws in the process and the conception.

Vivian explained that the IRMC was initially focused on big issues about safety, eliminating sexual harassment and people who would do harm. But it was then expected to deal with any conflict whatsoever that happens or has happened since the beginning of time, many of which bear only a tangential relationship to the Code of Conduct (CoC). The IRMC has repeated that it wants people to report, but the result is a lot of reports it really can't do anything about. And there should be more tools. We need to rethink how this works.

Vivian doesn't have a proposal; they would like to write something up, but they'd also like to have a Town Hall. How do we do it better? How do we fix perceptions about the IRMC that aren't necessarily correct? How do we do mediation and restorative justice? How do we (Arisia) do HR functions, and is that within the IRMC or not? And we want to hear lots of opinions on this.

The floor was then opened for comment:

Sabina brought up issues of freedom of speech, tolerance, embracing differences, and forgiving mistakes, and her concern that Arisia has moved away from those priorities. Vivian noted that Arisia has sometimes not been great for people who are not white and/or who are LGBTQ - we've done better on some issues than others. But inclusivity is our goal.

EJ mentioned that as a track/Area Head, after the event she hears about when a panel goes awry. She's heard several times about how long it takes reports to work their way through the system so that when somebody hears that they said something amiss, it's months later and they may not remember what happened. This makes the IRMC less effective. Rick noted that this happens with staff and attendees, not just panelists. Vivian clarified that the IRMC triages, rather than doing reports in the order they're received, which often means prioritizing safety, and then things involving senior staff or other time-sensitive issues. Borderline Code of Conduct issues get pushed to the end of the line, and Programming may already have dealt with panel-related cases and taken the person off of Programming.

Ilene said that when she thinks about IRs, she thinks about the serious safety-related ones. But there have been others more related to making people aware that something had been said or done incorrectly that might be addressed with education. She feels there should be some level of accountability when someone's been spoken to about their behavior multiple times and it's not sticking, and there should be a plan to address that. Vivian agreed that that's the HR-related part. Some people work well in some types of situations and not in others. Putting them in situations that don't fit their skills and needs makes them less likely to behave well. That's not a "you're a terrible person" thing; that's a "maybe this isn't the right job for you" thing. It's also not IRMC territory. Nobody likes to hear that they said a thing that was not okay, and IRMC gets lots of defensive responses. Sometimes they get genuinely apologetic responses where the person learns from being corrected, and then it doesn't happen again, and they

recommend no further action. Arisia needs another way to start those exchanges besides getting an email from the IRMC saying that someone has made a report about you. Because it is understandable that lots of pushback happens when that occurs.

Members then discussed the role of neurodiversity. Sabina noted that some autistic people have difficulty with social rules. Vivian pointed out that if someone engages in a problematic behavior and then indicates that they couldn't help it, then it's likely they'll engage in that behavior again. Several members agreed that neurodiversity is not an excuse for bad behavior. Attendees, whether or not they are neurospicy, do not have to follow all social conventions, but they do need to refrain from engaging in harmful behavior. Vivian stated that some people may need a helper or to work up to the Arisia they want. But that's not an IRMC matter.

Vivian reported that there is nothing on the IRMC docket that needs immediate action. They hope to have a new IRMC Chair well before the convention, but that's going to be a search process. In the meantime, they want to hold a Town Hall and develop values and plans for our community with which the future IRMC Chair can work.

Jaime noted that the IRMC started with a mandate to build a safer community, and still wants to do that, but has hit an inflection point where it may need to change how. Right now it's very process driven with a very HR focus. The IRMC needs to hear from the membership about how to focus its efforts. The IRMC is a black hole for a lot of people, on which natural fears get projected. Arisia isn't doing a good enough job of communicating about that to the larger community. The proper course of action for an IR at this time is often a warning or nothing. The IRMC was created to handle heavier issues, like whether someone is a safe person to be involved in the community. Is the fact that it gets a lot of lower impact complaints a bad thing or just a natural consequence?

The IRMC does not have a full report for this meeting. The EBoard voted to approve IRMC recommendations on several IRs, and each of those IRs resulted in agreement to take no further action. Jaime reported that Vivian has done a very good job of clearing out the backlog that existed before A24, and the IRMC started working on A24, but not gotten far yet. Vivian noted that they would like the future IRMC Chair to have a smaller job than they themselves have been doing thus far as IRMC Chair. They also indicated that Jaime and Kris who are both emeritus members of the committee bring a wealth of helpful institutional knowledge. Several members thanked Vivian for their hard work.

Mike Sprague suggested creating a bullet point list of what's needed for a future IRMC Chair and post it to the Corporate list to get more engagement. Vivian expressed a preference for finding out the community vision through a Town Hall first, and noted that the Chair would need to be organized, comfortable writing a lot of e-mails, thoroughly understand and agree with our Code of Conduct, and have the discretion to hold confidential information. Those traits can all be included in the list of bullet points, since they're unlikely to change, but they are a lot to ask and a big responsibility.

#### **Old Business:**

None.

### **New Business:**

Mike Sprague brought up the membership cap for the convention. Arisia has left it at 3500, and the Hyatt's capacity is less than 3500. Rick noted that attendance at previous Arisias at the Hyatt implied a capacity of 2500, but our most recent conventions have had fewer attendees than that. Our cap went up to 4000 when we moved to the Westin. Mike explained upon request that when a convention is small, anyone who pays can get a membership, but when it gets larger after a point it has to manage capacity. Food, safety, and limited numbers of volunteers influence that number. Vivian added that the cap is determined by Corporate and not by the Con Comm because the size of the convention has an influence on its identity and culture. Some cons, like Wiscon, cap at 2000 even though more people want to come, because that's the size con they want to be. We also want to be consistent and meet people's expectations. Claudia noted that if a Con Comm notices that the registration numbers are approaching the cap, they can talk to the EBoard about increasing the cap. Mike agreed to come up with a proposal once we confirm the capacity of the Hyatt. The issue will also be discussed on the Corporate e-mail list.

The Corporation voted via a show of hands to set the July corporate meeting date for **Sunday, July 21, 2024 at 2:00 pm.**

### **Announcements:**

Vivian and Dan confirmed that Arisia will be at LadiesCon. (See Calendar).

Rick announced that NESFA will be participating in Somerville Open Studios the first weekend in May. We will decorate the NESFA clubhouse windows that weekend, and there will be gaming on that Sunday.

Jaime reminded everyone that Boston Comics in Color is this weekend (April 19-21).

EJ stated that comics artists will be exhibiting at the Footlight Club in Jamaica Plain. The artist reception will be this Sunday, April 21, at 7a Eliot Street from 1-2 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

## **Calendar**

### Corporate Meetings

- Sunday, May 19, 2024 at 1:00 pm
- Tuesday, June 18, 2024 at 7:30 pm
- Sunday, July 21, 2024 at 2:00 pm

## Other Meetings and Events

### Upcoming Conventions

- LadiesCon - May 11, 2024, the Armory, Somerville, MA
- Watch City Steampunk Festival - May 11, 2024, Waltham, MA
- Readercon - July 11-14, 2024, Boston Quincy Marriott, Quincy, MA

Please also see <https://corp.arisia.org/calendar>.

## Membership List

This membership list is as of 11:00 PM on 1/24/2024. Please report any corrections to [clerk@arisia.org](mailto:clerk@arisia.org). Names in italics are non-voting members.

Daniel R. Abraham  
Vivian Abraham  
Wendee Abramo  
Joseph Andelman  
Inanna Arthen  
Julia Austein  
Priscilla Ballou  
E.J. Barnes  
Fred Bauer  
*Rob Bazemore*  
Anna Bradley  
Andrew Brockert  
Nicholas Brown  
Rebecca Brumberger  
Adam Burdick  
Brendon Chetwynd  
*Brian Cooper*  
Skyler Crossman  
Regis Donovan  
Jan Dumas  
Daniel Eareckson  
etana  
Kelly Fabijanec  
Sabina Fecteau  
Allison Feldhusen  
Jaime Garmendia  
Adrian Gunn  
Joel Herda  
Lenore Jones  
Melissa Kaplan  
Rick Kovalcik  
Sue Kramer  
Adria Kyne  
Henry Leong



Megan Lewis  
 Ken London  
 Claudia Mastroianni  
 Dale Meyer-Curley  
 Erik Meyer-Curley  
 Elliott Mitchell  
 Hope Moore  
 Skip Morris  
 Lia Olsborg  
 Kris Pelletier  
 Danielle Reese  
 Phoebe Roberts  
 Noel Rosenberg  
*A. Joseph Ross*  
 Sharon Sbarsky  
 Richard Schmeidler  
 Cate Schneiderman  
 Jason Schneiderman  
 JB Segal  
 Kylie Selkirk  
 Nicholas “phi” Shechtman  
*Cris Shuldiner*  
 Mike Sprague  
 Mary Stock  
 Rachel Tanenhaus  
 Ilene Tatroe  
 Mike Tatroe  
 Gail Terman  
 DJ Toland  
 Melia Vaden  
 Wendy Verschoor  
 Alan Wexelblat  
 Michelle Wexelblat  
 Nightwing Whitehead  
 Glen Williams

## Executive Board - eboard@

President	Vivian Abraham	president@
Vice President	Mike Sprague	vice-president@
Treasurer	Nicholas “phi” Schectman	treasurer@
Clerk	Rachel Tanenhaus	clerk@
Members-At-Large	Julia Austein	at-large@
	etana	
	Claudia Mastroianni	
Arisia '24 Con Chairs	Melissa Kaplan and Ilene Tatroe	conchair@

Arisia '24 Treasurer	Bill Sherman	con-treasurer@
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## Committee Membership

<p><b>Anti-Racism Committee (arc@)</b>          (No chair), Vivian Abraham, etana, Dan Franklin, Ken London, Nightwing Whitehead</p>
<p><b>Budget (budget@)</b>          Nicholas "phi" Shectman (chair), Kelly Fabijanic, Rachel Kadel, Alex Latzko, Benjamin Levy, Tom Traina, Ellie Younger</p>
<p><b>Corporate Communications (corpcomms@)</b>          Rachel Tanenhaus (chair), Justin du Coeur, Lenore Jean Jones, Ilene Tatroe, Julia Austein</p>
<p><b>Corporate Inventory Control (cic@):</b>          Rick Kovalcik (chair), Benjamin Levy, Skip Morris</p>
<p><b>Fundraising - donations@:</b>          Nicholas "phi" Shectman (chair), Addie Abrams, Kris Pelletier, Julia Austein, Matt Ringel, Rachel Silber</p>
<p><b>Grants (grantsrequest):</b>          Mike Sprague (chair), Joseph Andelman, David D'Antonio</p>
<p><b>Hotel Search (hotelsearch):</b>          Vivian (chair), Benjamin Levy, Nicholas "phi" Shectman</p>
<p><b>Incident Response Management Committee (IRMC) (incidents@):</b>          Vivian Abraham (chair), Claudia Mastroianni, etana, Delenn Brumberger Nightwing Whitehead, (advisory members: Jaime Garmendia, Melissa Kaplan, Kris Pelletier)</p>
<p><b>IT (it@):</b>          Gail Terman (chair), Rick Kovalcik, Benjamin Levy, Nick Brown, Sharon Sbarsky, Nicholas "phi" Shectman, Mike Tatroe, Daniel Abraham</p>
<p><b>Location Search (no email address):</b>          Gail Terman (chair), etana, Sol Houser</p>
<p><b>Long Range Planning (lrp@):</b>          (No chair), Anna Bradley, Heather Cougar</p>
<p><b>Mailing List Monitoring (monitor@):</b>          Claudia Mastroianni and Rachel Tanenhaus</p>
<p><b>Postmaster (postmaster@):</b>          Sharon Sbarsky (chair), Rick Kovalcik, Benjamin Levy, Nicholas "phi" Shectman, Mike Tatroe (advisory member)</p>
<p><b>Social (social@):</b>          (chair), Jan Dumas, Melissa Kaplan, Kim Riek, Mike Sprague, Alan Wexelblat</p>
<p><b>Student Contests (student-contests@):</b>          In need of members</p>

**Subscription and Dues information** Membership runs from September 1st to August 31st [\\*](#) and costs \$24 for the year. Dues are pro-rated on a monthly basis for members joining throughout the year. Subscription to the Arisia, Inc. newsletter, *Mentor of Arisia*, is included with corporate membership.

New members must attend one meeting after joining to receive voting privileges at subsequent meetings.

Pay for the month in which the next corporate meeting will take place (per the [calendar](#)).

September	\$24	March	\$12
October	\$22	April	\$10
November	\$20	May	\$8
December	\$18	June	\$6
January	\$16	July	\$4
February	\$14	August	\$2

If you cannot afford to purchase a membership, you may reach out to the Executive Board at [eboard@arisia.org](mailto:eboard@arisia.org) and request a dues waiver.

You can pay in cash at a corporate meeting, mail a check for the appropriate amount to Arisia, or use the PayPal button on the form at <https://corp.arisia.org/membership>. (You do not need a PayPal account to use your debit or credit card with PayPal.)

Arisia's mailing address is:

Arisia, Inc.

519 Somerville Avenue #371

Somerville, MA 02143