



# Mentor

The Newsletter of  
**Arisia, Incorporated**

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## About the Meeting

The next corporate meeting of Arisia, Inc. will be held on **Tuesday, June 18, 2024 at 7:30 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 May corporate meeting is **15**, based on 51% of the average attendance of the last three meetings  $((30+31+25)/3 \times 0.51) = 15$ .

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.

## May 19, 2024 Corporate Meeting Summary

The meeting was conducted over Zoom and called to order at 1:05 **PM**. There were 22 members attending:

- Dan Abraham
- Vivian Abraham
- Wendee Abramo
- Joseph Andelman
- Julia Austein
- Priscilla Ballou
- etana
- Kelly Fabijanec
- Sabina Fecteau
- Rick Kovalcik
- Ken London
- Claudia Mastroianni
- Erik Meyer-Curley
- Elliott Mitchell
- Sharon Sbarsky

Jason Schneiderman  
Nicholas “phi” Shectman  
Rachel Silber  
Mike Sprague  
Rachel Tanenhaus  
D.J. Toland  
Nightwing Whitehead

**Proxies:**

- Cate Schneiderman to Rachel Tanenhaus (accepted)
- etana to Dan Abraham (accepted)
- Dale Meyer-Curley to Erik Meyer-Curley (accepted)
- Ilene Tatroe to Vivian Abraham (accepted)

**Corrections to and approval of the April 2024 Minutes:**

Rachel suggested that the footer on the April minutes be changed to read April instead of March, and that New England Folks Festival be changed to New England Folk Festival. The minutes were approved unanimously via voice vote as amended.

**EBoard Report:**

Vivian took a fantastic training on accessibility from the MA Cultural Council. Vivian has many useful materials from that training. If you would like to see these materials, e-mail [vivian@arisia.org](mailto:vivian@arisia.org). The training included a lot of folks from the museum and arts worlds.

Vivian and Dan and etana tabled at LadiesCon, which went really well. Some people still hadn't heard of us! Even people who had heard of us hadn't necessarily known about everything we do. Lots of people were interested in participating in Arisia.

Vivian is working on the Corporate web site with Ben's help, slowly but surely. They're cleaning up the site, taking out bad links, correcting information, etc.

**President's Report:**

None.

**VPs Report:**

None.

**Treasurer's Report:**

phi presented a financial statement:

<b>Date:</b>	<b>5/15/2024</b>		
Assets:			
Bank accounts:		\$73,883.84	
Vendor deposits:		\$356.40	
Total assets:			\$74,240.24
Liabilities:			
Excess MCC funding:		\$2,522.00	
Unspent FY23-24 corporate expenses:		\$2,149.30	
Arisia 2025 income:		\$4,440.00	
Reserved funds:			
Equipment fund:	\$0.00		
Grant fund:	\$0.00		
Snow fund:	\$51,458.64		
Training fund:	\$1,022.00		
Total reserved funds:		\$52,480.64	
Total liabilities:			\$61,591.94
Net unrestricted funds:			\$12,648.30

This statement includes the Arisia 2024 surplus in net unrestricted funds.

phi talked about what this statement actually means. Is \$12,600 a healthy amount of money? He explained the Snow Fund line. It is based on two years of this:

Rent	-\$20,300.00
Mailbox	-\$360.00
Bank Fees	-\$144.00
Liability Insurance - Arisia Storage	-\$1,123.36
D&O Insurance	-\$940.00
Server Hosting - Hostgator	-\$1,798.08
Server Hosting - Registration/Linode	-\$408.00
Server Hosting - Dreamhost	-\$515.88
Remote Meeting Software	-\$140.00

The Snow Fund represents all of the expenses we'd have if there were no convention (mostly this means no Student Contest expense). It does not account for income we'd have if there were no convention. We did in fact have two years with no physical convention, starting with a full Snow Fund but no other reserves. We still got grant money and then the next physical convention ran a substantial surplus, so we recovered quickly. The last few years have been a stress test for our finances. phi thinks that the Snow Fund amount is ample to keep us afloat in any of the circumstances for which it was intended.

One of phi's long term goals is to reduce our fixed expenses, which will make the amount we need to reserve for the Snow Fund go down. This is relevant to the Corporate budget discussion below.

phi presented a Corporate budget:

		Year to date	FY23-24 Budget	FY24-25 Budget
Income:				
	Dues	\$1,270.00	\$1,258.00	\$1,200.00
	Donations	\$333.91	\$350.00	\$350.00
	Credit Card Cash Back	\$61.41	\$75.00	\$100.00
	Interest Income	\$8.20	\$10.00	\$20.00
	Convention Payment	\$19,000.00	\$19,000.00	\$24,000.00
Total Income		\$20,673.52	\$20,693.00	\$25,670.00
Expenses:				
	Bank Fees	\$121.00	\$145.00	\$145.00
	Paypal Fees	\$54.33	\$55.00	\$55.00
	Filing Fees	\$53.50	\$53.50	\$53.50
	Mailbox	\$356.40	\$356.40	\$356.40
	Storage Rent	\$15,993.00	\$17,652.00	\$20,300.00
	Liability Insurance	\$1,123.36	\$1,123.36	\$1,200.00
	D&O Insurance	\$940.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,050.00
	Elections	\$90.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
	Zoom Account	\$79.95	\$79.75	\$79.75
	Website & IT	\$1,960.67	\$2,356.50	\$2,048.52
	Student Contests	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00

	SMOFcon Scholarships	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Total Expenses		\$20,772.21	\$22,921.51	\$29,388.17
Net Surplus/(Deficit)			-\$2,228.51	-\$3,718.17

This Corporate budget is what was previously printed in Mentor, except with the year-to-date numbers updated. phi noted the need for a second from the membership and Vivian seconded the Corporate budget.

phi explained that there are two kinds of nonprofits: grant-making and grant-seeking. A grant-making organization holds events whose primary purpose is fundraising. This gives them a lot of freedom for the content of the events -- they can just be big parties and don't have to have any mission-related content. Often these kinds of organizations aren't really good at directly fulfilling their mission, so they outsource that to grant-seeking organizations. In these organizations, expenses are to be minimized as a hindrance to accomplishing the mission.

A grant-seeking organization holds events whose primary purpose is furthering the nonprofit mission. These don't have to be 100% mission related, and they can have a substantial fundraising component. Some partying is still allowed and expenses that don't further the mission are still a hindrance. But these organizations have ample opportunities to spend money in ways that benefit the mission and overall, the goal is to get to spend more money, not less.

Arisia has had feet in both of these worlds for quite a long time. But lately we're much more of a grant-seeking organization than we'd been in the days of the giant, super-profitable conventions. We have more opportunities to spend money on our mission than we have money to spend.

phi stated that we need the financial flexibility to spend money as those opportunities arise, and that as much as possible discretionary spending should be in the Convention budget, where it is easier to transfer money between line items. The Corporate budget consists only of our non-discretionary spending -- contracts we've already signed like our rent, expenses dictated by policy like the SMOFcon scholarships, and unavoidable expenses like our mailbox. This budget also does not include grant money as income. We don't know how much grant income there will be, and assigning that income to the convention will give us more flexibility on how to spend it.

phi added that the only number here that we really get to adjust is the convention payment. Before the A24 books closed, he thought we'd have to increase that number and that's why he proposed a \$24,000 payment. This would still have us dipping into our unreserved funds some, but he was worried about how long those would last, especially if we made unbudgeted expenses. But our storage is only half full, and some of that hasn't been to a convention for a

long time. The commercial real estate market is softening and right now there are suitable spaces available much closer to the convention for more per square foot but less money overall. We're also working towards lowering our IT costs, as evidenced from that number being lower in the coming fiscal year than the current one, and that should be lower still in future years. So our \$12,600 doesn't have to last forever.

phi noted that we can at least leave the convention payment at \$19,000 for this year. We might be able to leave it there for a long time. phi moved to amend this budget by changing the \$24,000 convention payment to \$19,000. Rachel T. seconded the motion.

- Vivian asked if it is feasible to move storage this year. It isn't; we have a three-year lease. If we changed storage spaces, it would happen after Arisia 2027. They also asked for a clarification of Corporate vs. Convention expenses.
- Rick stated he was against the amendment because he felt like there shouldn't be huge changes from year to year and leaving more money with the Corporation would ensure stability. He also felt that the Corporation should fund scholarships for Arisia folks to attend and help out at other events, which would spread the word about Arisia.
- Vivian pointed out that the convention is still in a state of flux.
- Rick noted that the extra cushion accounts for possible future ConChairs (no one in particular) who are bad at budgeting.
- Mike said that as VP and head of the Grants Committee, we're still not in a place yet where we can put out grants, and that we can assess our readiness every year. He also said that Arisia's philosophy has generally been to trust our future selves, but also that we have historically budgeted conservatively.
- phi explained Rick's reference - Arisia 2003 lost around \$20k, and that convention is why we have a Snow Fund.
- Team Voltron is reviewing the budget based on last year and looking at the needs for this year, especially in the new space. They appreciate the flexibility and knowing that they can always come back to the Corporation to ask for more money, but also intend to budget within their means. They have no strong opinion on the proposed amendment.

The amendment was then put to a vote by poll. The amendment failed 5-10. The budget was then voted on for approval. The budget passed unanimously via voice vote (17-0).

#### **Clerk's Report:**

None.

#### **A24 Con Comm Report:**

phi presented the final A24 financial report. Rick noted that some of the expenses listed are comped by the hotel. phi said he did that in categories that were part cash and part comp (e.g., Internet drops), so people wouldn't have to worry about which department's were comped and which were paid in cash. He also did this for categories where we sold the thing we were

comped (e.g., suites). Mike asked if the January surge in Con memberships was since January 1 or at-con. phi said the estimated numbers were thrown off by the 2022 cancellation and the resultant 2023 rollovers, plus COVID, so we weren't sure how to determine a baseline.

Vivian motioned to close the Arisia 2024 books. Priscilla seconded. The membership voted unanimously via voice vote to close the Arisia 2024 books.

## **A25 Con Comm Report:**

### **What we've been doing**

Over the past month, the A25 con chairs have worked hard on prioritizing the hiring of division heads. We are excited to announce our Team Arisia Services (TAS) division head is Vivian Abraham. We have interviews pending with Registration and Access. We are next prioritizing the Treasurer role, which is a position that can be done remotely! Organizationally, we're all up on Trello, have collected all the Job Descriptions into one place and are going through each division to ensure they're correct and up-to-date, and are meeting weekly.

### **Recruiting - where we need your help!**

We are reaching out to people individually to gauge interest in positions - if you'd like to try something different this year please contact us! **Don't wait for us to reach out, give us a ping!** You can email [conchair@arisia.org](mailto:conchair@arisia.org) to reach all 5, or email any of us separately. Assistant Division Head positions are especially vital, as that is where you train up to be a future division head. We are embedding supports along the way, so if you are interested but unsure or want to talk about it, contact us. Nothing is set in stone unless it's stone.

We are currently looking for candidates for: Hotel Liaison, Communications, Events, Exhibits, Gaming, GoH Liaison, IT Support, Technical Services, Youth Services, & Treasurer. This isn't the full list, but these are the ones with the longest lead-times to get started. Even if you think you can do most of the functions of that role, and are interested, let us know - we're all about getting you the support you need for the rest.

### **Guests of Honor**

We have reviewed the Guests of Honor survey; thank you to everyone who participated. We are in the process of reaching out to several people including a costumer! We hope to hear back from folks and have our line up ready to announce in the coming weeks.

### **Outreach**

We tabled alongside Arisia President Vivian at LadiesCon last weekend. It was a lot of fun. We talked to many people who had never heard of or been to Arisia before, and generated quite a bit of interest. We will be putting together a list of cons and events for tabling and/or sending out our nifty flier - if there's an event at which you'd like to see us, please let us know!

### **Student Writing Contest**

A note regarding the **student writing contest** - yes it's happening for A25! We need some folks to help get letters emailed/mailed to schools and to be on a reading review panel alongside our Writer Guest(s) of Honor. We need letters sent out in May, so the turnaround for that is quick, though entries won't be due until the beginning of October. Please email [etana@arisia.org](mailto:etana@arisia.org) to join the team, or email [conchair@arisia.org](mailto:conchair@arisia.org).

And finally, thank you to everyone who helps make our lives easier as we work as a team to make A25 happen.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### Budget:

None.

#### Corporate Communications:

(Members: Rachel)

None.

#### Corporate Inventory Control (CIC):

(Members: Rick, Ben, Skip)

- The CIC is trying to figure out who has keys to storage. Rick is in the process of contacting people with keys, but they don't always respond. The landlord won't let us have our own restricted blank that can't be duplicated. If you need access or if you need a key and it's not obvious, e-mail [cic@arisia.org](mailto:cic@arisia.org).
- Vivian noted that if we're going to change the locks, we should do it earlier in the year rather than closer to the Convention.
- phi said that the landlord was willing to re-key the lock as long as their master key would still work, and it would probably happen over the summer.
- Dan asked if there was any reason why we're not using a combination lock where they could change the combination when needed, rather than using physical keys. Combination locks are more expensive.
- Dan asked if we were more concerned about people being able to get in when needed or keeping people out who shouldn't be able to. Rick wasn't very worried about either.
- Rick noted that NESFA makes key-holders sign a paper that says they won't copy the key and will give it back if requested by the EBoard.
- phi said that we should change the locks from time to time, and we've generally done it every five years, which he thinks is about right. Many possible solutions don't work with the blank the landlord uses.
- Rachel T. said she's more worried about unwanted access rather than people not being able to get in.
- Rick said we know everyone who has a key.



- Rick noted that NESFA has no property in Arisia storage; Arisia has property in NESFA storage.
- Vivian gave an example from a long time ago where someone with a key loaned an item to Arisia, and consented to that thing being kept in storage. At some point years later, when everyone had forgotten that that thing didn't actually belong to Arisia, they let themselves in and got the thing back. Later, when people looked for the thing, they thought it had been stolen, and freaked out.
- Mike said when he was ConChair he was given a key, and when he was done he gave it back when requested. But over time, people might forget they have or lose keys. Having the list of people who have access to keys be as small as possible is just good security.
- phi said we picked the place in part because it made work sessions easy, relative to our previous storage space.
- Rick said that the CIC will consider possibly necessary policies, and that NESFA has a policy that if you loan them anything, it should be clearly marked with your name and contact information.

Discord:

(Members: Justin)

The Discord server exists, but isn't open. Plans continue apace.

Fundraising:

phi is applying for two grants on Arisia's behalf.

Grants:

(Members: Mike)

Suspended until finances get stabilized.

Hotel Search Committee:

(Members: Vivian, phi, Ben)

Hotel search is complete and therefore this Committee is inactive. If Committee members could be available for communication with the ConChair team as needed, that would be great, particularly around hotel contract issues.

Incident Response Management Committee (IRMC):

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

None.

IT:

(Members: Rick, Sharon, Nick, Ben, phi, Mike T., Dan)

Gail is no longer on the IT Committee. Thank you for your work, Gail! The IT Committee will determine a new Chair.

Postmaster:

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

None.

Social:

(Mike)

Vivian asked Mike to be Chair and if they could be on the Committee. Mike said yes to both.

Student Contests:

(members needed)

The Con Chair team is working on this, but this is a Corporate Committee and the budget is in the Corporate Budget. Julia is not offering to take this on, but agrees that it is a Corporate function. The Art Show will set aside a panel for it but is not in charge of it. When etana is feeling better and is not in the hospital, Vivian will ask them to Chair this Committee. etana wants to be part of the group but not to lead it, but could lead if enough people want to help with recruitment and sending letters to the schools and read the submissions. There hasn't been much historical documentation. etana will reach out to Kris P. for some historical context. May has generally been when schools were contacted, so etana will move quickly. Vivian will help. etana will use Canva to make an accessible flier. Julia will reach out to someone who may be interested in helping.

**Old Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

None.

The Corporation voted unanimously via a show of hands to set the August corporate meeting date for **Tuesday August 20, 2024 at 7:00 pm.**

**Announcements:**

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:58 pm.

## Calendar

### Corporate Meetings

- Tuesday, June 18, 2024 at 7:30 pm
- Sunday, July 21, 2024 at 2:00 pm
- Tuesday, August 20, 2024 at 7:00 pm

### Other Meetings and Events

#### Upcoming Conventions

- 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 Fabijanic  
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” Sheckman  
*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” Sheckman	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@

## 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 Abraham (chair), Benjamin Levy, Nicholas "phi" Shectman</p>
<p><b>Incident Response Management Committee (IRMC) (incidents@):</b> Claudia Mastroianni, etana, Delenn Brumberger Nightwing Whitehead, (advisory members: Jaime Garmendia, Melissa Kaplan, Kris Pelletier, Vivian Abraham)</p>
<p><b>IT (it@):</b> 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> Mike Sprague (chair), Vivian Abraham</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