Gulf Coast Writers Association
Executive Committee Meeting
April 14, 2026 by Zoom
Minutes

Call Meeting to Order: Meeting called to order at 5:01 pm by President, **Christie Zarria**

Attending: Claudia Volkman, Lori Swick, Laura Schueneman, Laura Fuller, Andrew Conlyn, Ginger Wakem, Mary Beth Leopold, Dave Kratzke

Absent: Jeanne Meeks, Claudia Geagan, Amie Raterman, Rita Angelini, Mike Cole, Mary Charles, Cheryl Lynn Dratler

Reports from Officers:

Minutes: Christie submitted the Minutes via email prior to the meeting. Ginger moved to approve the minutes as submitted and Lori seconded. Motion passed.

Web Manager: Laura Fuller gave a presentation on website software Wild Apricot and discussed the future of our website and our growing membership. It was agreed that the recorded presentation would be shared with absent members. Christie said she would like to vote on adding this to the 2026-2027 budget at the May executive meeting.

Treasurer: Mary Beth announced that it was her last day as interim treasurer and that Rita would be taking over. Mary Beth discussed a line item from January to February.
March's ending cash balance is Over $20,000.
This year's writing contest brought in $2,603. Deducting prizes and food, GCWA made approximately $1,500 in profit on the contest.
We only need to have the most recent approved treasurer's report on the members's area of the website, per the bylaws. Laura F. said she would post the March report and await Rita's report. Laura F. moved to approve the treasurer reports that were approved. Christie seconded it. The motion was approved.

Communications: Ginger discussed selling GCWA books in the area. Roger Baker will help with marketing. It was discussed allowing members and non-members advertise services on the GCWA facebook and website.

The charges from a mystery Canva account were discussed. Laura fuller said she needs the bylaws to post on the website. Christie said she had sent them today.

Programs: Lori Swick discussed the upcoming poetry slam.

Membership: Jeanne was not at the meeting, however, Mary Beth stated that new members have generated $4133 for GWCA and renewing members have generated $4,254. Increasing the return visitor fee was discussed. Now, it is $5. Increasing member dues was discussed. It is now $50. St. Hilary's rent was discussed. Now it is $200 per month. We are not sure if it will increase next year.
Ginger moved that we raise the single meeting charge tp $10 as of on June 1. Lori seconded it. The motion passed. The first meeting will remain free.
Christie suggested that we inform members at the may meeting that we will be discussing and voting on a dues increase and the June meeting.

Nationwide insurance increase in premiums was was discussed. It was suggested that it was related to the move to St. Hilary's. Christie said she will look into D&O insurance.

Christie stated that increasing the website budget to $2,300 made sense based on Laura Fuller's presentation. Ginger suggested making the website budget $2500.

Christie said she would update Rita's accounting forms based on the numbers discussed at today's meeting and disseminate said form to the GCWA board for approval and then return it to Rita.

Mary Beth stated that Miscellaneous expenses in communications are erroneous. A revenue had been labeled as an expense. Duncan Donuts and Amazon expenses were discussed.

Capital Outlay:
Christie stated that zoom will stay with us. We discontinued meetup, Whatsup Florida, and patch.com.
She is happy with the sound system, laptop, and projector. Roger Baker donated a sign.

Special Programs: Christie will get input from Claudia on those items. The anthology revenue is winding down.

PSAs and digital campaigns were discussed.
We have 180 members. We had about 60 in attendance at the last meeting.
Facebook and google campaigns were briefly discussed.

Lori asked—How many members we want to attract and at what rate? She asked if we need to spend a lot of money to get new members. This was discussed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:23 pm.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: May 12, 2026, 5:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Laura Schueneman