

American Humanist Association Board of Director's Meeting Minutes

Philadelphia- June 5, 2014

~Minutes~

Present: Jason Torpy, Tony Pinn, Debbie Allen, Rob Boston, Kristin Wintermute, Herb Silverman, John Hooper, Raul Martinez, Jennifer Kalmanson, Becky Hale, Susan Sackett, Howard Katz (on phone).

AHA Staff: Roy Speckhardt, Maggie Ardiente, Meghan Hamilton

1. Call to order (by chair: Rebecca) 8:05 am

- a. Introduction of board members and staff
- b. The Chair appointed Jennifer Kalmanson as parliamentarian.
- c. The Chair appointed Meghan Hamilton as recording secretary.
- d. No new business was suggested

2. Acceptance/amendment of May meeting minutes

Jenny moved to adopt the minutes. Jason seconded. Approved by consensus.

3. Ratify between meeting votes

- a. Vote for consent to merge Humanist Charities into the Foundation Beyond Belief's Humanist Charitable Relief Project: All approve.
- b. Vote to approve the Sunday Assembly of Los Angeles as an AHA Chapter: All Approve.

4. Financial update:

Jason read a copy of the financial report for the members in the gallery. Roy has been keeping AHA on budget. Maggie maintains AHA's high ratings from the BBB and GuideStar. Jason said that overall, things are looking positive and we are the second largest or largest organization in the movement. Roy mentioned the audit is final.

5. Bylaws consideration.

Jason explained it is important to have the voting process up to date and easily accessible to voters. Online voting is so easy and everyone can do it now as compared to postal mail which is very slow and wastes money on mailing. Becky asked if we will still allow mail in ballots. Roy said that when we did the voting primarily online it worked out well and we are scheduled to move to online only voting this election. If voters call in and request a mail in ballot, the Votenet service will send them one.

Jason moved to accept the bylaw change removing the word "mail" from Article V Elections, Section 1. Jenny seconded. Approved by consensus.

Board elections update

Mel Lipman has already notified all of the candidates. Tony informed Jason that the two of them will we have a conversation about criteria.

Global Secular Humanist Movement

Board members discussed a proposal submitted by Faisal Saeed Al Mutar, director of the Global Secular Humanist Movement.

Board decided that they would like to investigate more carefully Faisal's organization and its needs, and to have the AHA to develop a broader plan for addressing the particular needs of Ex-Muslim humanists who would like to partner with the AHA.

Becky proposed to vote in about a month when we have better information. Jenny issued a motion to explore the idea of a committee to address this issue. Raul seconded. Passes with ten in favor and one abstention.

-----**AHA meeting temporarily adjourns**-----

Center for Humanist Activism

Bishop reported that AHA's related 501(c)4, the Center for Humanist Activism, has just passed 5,000 members. Bishop wants to be very clear that it's connected PAC, the Freethought Equality Fund, is not a Super PAC.

Roy said that there is confusion on the names of CHA and the FEF and that people don't know which one is the PAC. Jason said that he doesn't want to take out "humanism" from the title and that we should change the FEF name instead. Becky is conflicted about taking humanism out. She said the wording "Freethought" will get a better reach but we do not want to give up branding. Susan suggests we use both humanist and Freethought in the title. Bishop explains that although he understands branding, politically it is important to broaden our perspective if we want acceptance on a larger scale. We have to be willing to compromise with our outreach efforts; the primary goal is to endorse candidates who are dedicated to the first amendment and changing the name will help do that. Herb agrees that changing the name to accommodate the audience can be beneficial. Bishop explains that a little separation is required. Roy explained that the AHA is connected to the C4 and the C4 will have AHA branding on it. The AHA cannot brand the PAC. It has to be connected through the C4. Becky asks what the tagline should be. Jason said it's not a humanist PAC only, the priority is church state.

Roy reads the FEF mission statement to the board to clarify. Roy said we mostly support church/state candidates because they will stand up for humanists and atheists; they must support non-believers or secularism.

Jenny moved to adopt the name change. Herb seconded. All are in consensus.

Becky reiterates that branding is important. Jason requests a report to the board on the reasons why it is difficult to use the word humanism. Jason thinks we should try to get more humanist candidates. He would also like notes about who we supported and who we didn't and the reasons why.

Jenny moves to accept the CHA meeting minutes. Jason seconds. Approved by consensus.

-----**10:31 Resume AHA meeting**-----

Scientific Integrity Resolution

Jason said the AHA is not a science review board. He said we refocused on this resolution, which is about information but doesn't have us claiming to be scientific experts. The resolution should have a scientific background. We can publish it to take stand supporting science. (Jason described the resolution as written.) Discussion.

scientific integrity and we don't want to have too much over-reach with the word "science."
Jason moves to accept with the limited changes. Kristin seconded. Approved by consensus.

Approach list

Susan read the awardee approach list to the board.

6. Programs

Humanist Press

Luis reported that the Humanist Press is producing some great books and have found out how to get them into distribution channels. Authors are coming to us and we are getting more inquiries than we can handle. Luis is also learning more about printing on demand. Luis said we are doing very well at marketing but we need to get better. He has additionally spent some time learning better marketing techniques. Luis will be retiring at end of the month from his day job as a corporate attorney and will be dedicating more time to the Humanist Press.

Humanist Magazine

Roy and Maggie reported that the launch of thehumanist.com has been a huge success and is attracting tens of thousands of folks to our new original content site.

Humanist Society

There has been an 85% increase from last year in celebrants. Jason explained how the senior celebrant category has been a source of confusion for some people; some things will soon be changed such as re-engineering the senior celebrant level category. Kristin said we need to be clearer to people about what the celebrant categories mean.

Kristin is hoping the training sessions will be able to be brought to more people in the future. The next training will be in Washington DC the day following the Board Meeting in November.

Development

Maggie reported that we are one of the largest organizations in the movement. The idea of membership is changing with most of our constituent numbers continuing to grow rapidly. Fundraising is going well. Accountability is going well. Maggie said we have the highest rating with the BBB.

Communications

Maggie reported that our lawsuits have gotten a high amount of press. We have been getting press on just about everything we do. Maggie said the AHA is becoming the go-to organization for representing humanist ideas and the nonbeliever perspective.

Advocacy

Maggie reported on the AHA's growing connections in Congress and how we cover a variety of social issues. Rush Holt introduced the Darwin Day Resolution and we got two members of Congress to issue proclamations on National Day of Reason.

Chapter Services Committee

New groups wishing to be official chapters were read, including:

1. OMAHA (Omaha Metro Area Humanist Association)
2. Jefferson Humanists
3. Southeast Texas Humanists Alliance
4. Central New York Humanist Association
5. Hudson Valley Humanists

New groups wishing to be affiliates were read, including:

1. Washburn Freethinkers
2. Deltona Humanist
3. Humanists of Lower Slower Delaware
4. Last Frontier Freethinkers

Jenny moved to accept all the new chapters and affiliates. Rob seconded. All in consensus.

AHA gave 11 grants to chapters this year. Janny Stratichuk from Moscow, was hired help three groups develop further. This represents an extension of our continued funding of the Palouse area.. We have also spent more time tabling at regional and national conferences, sometimes tabling with staff, and other times volunteers.

Kristin said she is willing to have Humanist Institute cover the AHA when she tables at the upcoming UUA General Assembly.

SCA

Jason said there is a lobby day coming up for SCA and Roy added that there will be four members of congress attending, which is a record for any event in our movement.

IHEU

Andrew Copson, VP of IHEU, reported that there will be 1,000 representatives attending from 50 countries. The IHEU meeting for 2017 will be in Brazil. Andrew said he held a few remaining tickets for organizations who have other employees or board members who want to go.

AHLC

David Niose said he will be able to deliver a more detailed report on the AHLC activities Saturday morning during his presentation, but that the AHLC has had a lot of success over the past year as well as one major disappointment.

Next Meeting

Becky informed those present that the next board meeting will be on Saturday November 8th in Washington DC. Susan asked when the election is. Roy answered that voting begins in July.

New Business

Beck asked if there is any new business to discuss. Raul would like the board to think about having a future conference in Las Vegas.

Adjournment

Meeting concludes at 11:47am