



American Humanist Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Teleconference – February 17, 2015

Board Meeting Agenda

1. Call to order (by chair: Becky)

The meeting was called to order at 8:10pm Eastern Time.

- a. Roll call and introductions

Board members in attendance: Rebecca Hale, Jennifer Kalmanson, Susan Sackett, John Hooper, Rob Boston, Herb Silverman, Debbie Allen, Christine Shellska, July Simpson, Kristin Wintermute, Jason Torpy, Howard Katz. Absent: Anthony Pinn.

AHA Staff: Roy Speckhardt, Maggie Ardiente, Jessica Xiao (joined the call later)

- b. Appointment of parliamentarian (Howard)

Howard was appointed parliamentarian.

- c. Appointment of recording secretary (Jessica)

Maggie was appointed recording secretary in place of Jessica, who was experiencing phone connection issues. Jessica later joined on the call and replaced Maggie as recording secretary.

- d. Suggestions for new business to be considered

No new business was introduced.

2. Acceptance/amendment of November meeting minutes (p. 2)

Howard moved to approve the November 2014 meeting minutes. Debbie seconded. Approved by consensus.

3. Between meeting votes to ratify:

- a. Vote to accept nomination of Amanda Knief to the position of co-chair of the AHA Feminist Caucus. 6 votes in favor, 5 votes against. Motion carries.

Jenny moved to ratify the vote to accept the nomination of Amanda Knief as co-chair of the AHA Feminist Caucus. Susan seconded. Approved by consensus.

- b. Vote to allocate the entire bequest from the Emily C. Bond Trust to the Humanist Foundation less a hold-back of 5% for use with the Humanist Institute and for Staff bonuses. 9 votes in favor, 1 abstention, 1 non-voting. Motion carries.

Debbie moved to ratify the vote to allocate the Emily C. Bond Trust bequest to the Humanist Foundation, with 5% toward the Humanist Institute and staff bonuses. Jenny seconded.
Approved by consensus.

- c. Vote for slate of officers (P-Hale, VP-Kalmanson, S-Sackett, T-Hooper). 12 yes votes. Motion carries unanimously.

Howard moved to ratify the vote for the slate of officers. Debbie seconded. Approved by consensus.

4. Financial update
 - a. 2014 Review

John referred board members to page 29 of the packet. He reported that year-end income was the highest on record, even without counting the significant bequests last year. Income was met or exceeded in most of the categories, but particularly contributions, bequests, and legal settlements. On expenses, more was spent, but still resulted in \$130,000 at the end of the year. Many of the big expenses were circumstantial, such as fixing the office front door. John invited further questions from the board.

- b. Humanist Foundation

John said it's been a good year of investing and contributions. Jenny added that she receives an email a week from Alliance Bernstein with reports on the investments; the Humanist Foundation's philosophy is to hold a steady hand, and it's been working well.

5. Strategic planning

Becky said work on the strategic plan will start soon. Jenny is head of the newly-created strategic planning committee, and Becky invited other board members to participate. Becky, Debbie, Jason, and Roy will serve on the committee, and an invitation to Tony will be extended.

6. Bylaws Committee (pp. 11-19)

Howard presented the bylaws he worked on with Roy to the board for consideration. Small editorial corrections were suggested by board members. There was concern that parliamentary duties may conflict with secretary and presidential roles. There was concern regarding representation. Maggie will inform conference attendees of the importance of their presence at AHA session in registration packets.

Becky introduced the idea of having all-elected board members versus holding two to four positions appointed by AHA board to allow for continuity. Discussion on merits of democratic process and utilization of nominating committee. Further discussion on whether or not to keep term limits for board members and executive committee members. A concern was raised regarding training and transitioning for the president. July suggested a possible president-elect position so that this can be addressed. Further discussion to take place offline.

7. Center for Freethought Equality meeting
 - a. Update and consider any input (p. 23)

b. Approved updated boards

Becky suggested moving the meeting of the Center for Freethought Equality to the end of the call, and there was no objection.

8. Awards Committee (Susan)

Susan mentioned the names of the six awardees who will be honored at the AHA Conference in Denver this May. Maggie briefly described a few of the awardees for those who were unfamiliar with them.

9. Secular Leadership Summit

Roy said board members can read his write-up of the Secular Leadership Summit that was published in *The Huffington Post*. Board members who attended expressed that the event was a success. Roy said the next Summit will be hosted by American Atheists, followed by the Center for Inquiry.

10. Reason Rally

Debbie spoke briefly about the Reason Rally and how it is planned for Spring 2016 in Washington DC. Debbie will garner AHA board feedback and objectives for Reason Rally 2016.

11. Chicago Conference

Maggie reported on the 75th Anniversary Conference of the AHA, to take place May 26-29, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place in Chicago, IL. The room rate is \$129. She invited board members to send suggestions on ideas to make the conference successful.

12. Programs, adjuncts and coalitions action items (pp. 20-30)

a. Appignani Humanist Legal Center (p. 20)

Roy reported on two particular AHLC cases that have been picked up by the media: the ‘under god’ case in New Jersey, which was unsuccessful, and challenging a student saying ‘god bless America’ over the loudspeaker at a public school in Florida, for which further action will not be made at this time.

Kristin mentioned the pilot of a secular law symposium and webinar to be held in Minneapolis in March, directed at lawyers continuing their education. Debbie suggested this event be used to create material for AHA chapters. Roy and Kristin will collaborate in getting a videographer.

Becky will ask David to inform the board ahead of time if any “hot-button” issues are predicted to arise.

b. Approve new chapters and affiliates (p. 24)

Jason moved to approve the four new groups. Rob seconded. Approved by consensus.

Debbie asked about the Parade Guide, and Roy gave an update on its status: the materials are there, but it’s not yet complete.

c. United Coalition of Reason

Roy reported on the status of the United Coalition of Reason. Herb asked if Fred is still involved, and Roy said he is just putting in a few hours a week, with coordination transferring to Jason Heap. Debbie asked about the future of UnitedCoR, and Roy explained that it will be up to the major funder and Jason to decide its future.

Board members who are local leaders or involved in local groups discussed a recent invitation sent by a new organization, the Secular Policy Institute, to affiliate with their organization.

d. The Humanist Institute

Kristin spoke briefly on the latest from the Humanist Institute, with expected collaborations with AHLC and IHS, with restructure of graduate program, as well as the marketing objectives, which will emphasize the importance of being an articulate advocate of humanism.

e. International Humanist Ethical Union

i. General Assembly in Manila

Susan, who is on the executive committee of the International Humanist and Ethical Union, said that the General Assembly will be taking place in the Philippines on May 30 in conjunction with a conference hosted by PATAS (Philippine Atheist and Agnostic Society). Currently, no one from AHA is planning to attend.

ii. World Congress 2020

Becky asked if the decision for the World Humanist Congress 2020 will take place at that meeting, and if so, that it's important for an AHA representative to be there. Becky mentioned that they've already tried to reach out to some people but they haven't been able to find anyone. Maggie suggested that if American Ethical Union is attending (which wants to co-host the 2020 conference), then it's important for AHA to also be there to lobby for hosting. Kristin will ask Bart Worden if he or someone from AEU plans to attend. Susan will find out if the decision for WHC 2020 will be voted on at the Manila GA.

13. Board meeting room is reserved in Denver for Wednesday 5PM-10PM and Thursday 8AM-noon

Becky reiterated the date and time for the May 2015 board meeting, to be held before the AHA Conference in Denver.

14. New business

No new business was introduced.

Howard moved to adjourn the American Humanist Association Board of Directors meeting. Jenny seconded. Approved by consensus.

The American Humanist Association Board of Directors meeting ended at 9:39pm.

15. Center for Freethought Equality meeting

Becky called to order the meeting of the Center for Freethought Equality at 9:40pm.

Board members in attendance: Rebecca Hale, Susan Sackett, Herb Silverman, Debbie Allen, Jason Torpy, Staff in attendance: Roy Speckhardt, Maggie Ardiente, Jessica Xiao. Guests in attendance: Jennifer Kalmanson, John Hooper, Herb Silverman, Debbie Allen, Jason Torpy, Howard Katz. Absent: Amanda Knief, Lou Altman

a. Update and consider any input (p. 23)

Roy reported that a proposal was sent to the main funder of the CFE for another year. He hasn't heard back yet, but feels he will be receptive to it. Roy said the proposal includes adding a companion SuperPAC to expand FEF's potential. Becky said that Bishop is doing a good job.

b. Approved updated boards

Roy reported that the CFE and Freethought Equality Fund (FEF) PAC now have the following board members for both groups, which are now identical: Debbie Allen, Becky Hale, Amanda Knief, Jason Torpy, Susan Sackett, Lou Altman, and Herb Silverman. The FEF Advisory Board includes Anne Mardick, Scott Seidewitz, David Williamson, Jeff Hawkins, and Woody Kaplan.

Jason moved to adjourn the meeting of the Center for Freethought Equality. Susan seconded.

The Center for Freethought Equality meeting ended at 9:43pm.