Blue Ridge Mountains Rotary

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Zoom Videoconference

January 20, 2021

**Directors Present**

Franklin Daniels, Aimee Andrews, Roger Higgins, Wayne Murphy, Thomas Markham, Amy Hart, Erik Greenbaum, Matt Crane, Ravi Respeto, Ty Cooper, Norman Gee, Bruce Woodzell

**Welcome and Call to Order**

Franklin Daniels, President, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:30am.

**President’s Report**

* Mr. Daniels noted that at the half-year mark, the Club’s membership has remained stable despite the pandemic.
  + Erik Greenbaum asked if hard numbers were available for membership levels year-on-year. Ravi Respeto showed the Board the member dashboard in ClubRunner, which showed a slight decline (89 to 84 members) from January 2020 to January 2021.
* Mr. Daniels raised the issue of long-range planning for the Club, noting two possible areas of focus in particular:
  + Anticipating the need for/opportunity to merge with one or more other local Rotary clubs given the membership challenges most clubs are facing currently.
  + DEIJ issues: Roger Higgins, Vice President, is leading a committee on these issues but has paused work until in-person meetings can resume.
* Ravi Respeto, Immediate Past President, raised the issue of finding a replacement for Linda Smith to serve as “Sunshine Lady,” responsible for sending cards to members who have had a life event, etc., given Linda’s ongoing medical challenges.

**Financial Report**

Ben Horne, Treasurer, submitted a financial report to the group in absentia (attached).

**President Elect**

Aimee Andrews, President-Elect, raised the following issues:

* Other Rotary clubs
  + Ms. Andrews noted that during her pre-PETS training for incoming presidents, she has noticed that many clubs in the district are suffering and considering drastic changes such as becoming satellite clubs. By contrast, our Club is doing well.
* Board-elect
  + Ms. Andrews has held the first meeting of the 2021-22 board, and introduced her themes for the year, including celebrating the membership; community service; and promoting the Club in the local area.

**Vice President/Membership**

Roger Higgins, Vice President, raised the following issues:

* Membership
  + The Club inducted its 7th new member for the year during today’s Club meeting. Four additional prospects have been invited to meetings.
* Rabbit Run 5K
  + The small group planning this fundraiser will be meeting the following week.
* Diversity Committee
  + This committee has paused its work until in-person conversations can resume.
  + Mr. Daniels asked to have it communicated to those who have been invited to be a part of this work that it is paused and has not been forgotten.

**Past President**

Ravi Respeto, Immediate Past President, raised the following issues:

* Membership
  + The Club’s membership remains slanted towards older members and the Club should think about ways to reach younger members, particularly in the 40s, which is a sweet spot. Community service is one way to connect with potential new members.
* Diversity Committee
  + Kevin McDonald from UVA is working on a framework for connecting with the community. This framework, or parts of it, could be useful for organizing the Club’s work on this issue.

**Secretary’s Report**

Thomas Markham, Secretary, presented minutes from the November 18 meeting for approval.

***Motion****: Mr. Higgins moves to accept the November 18 minutes. Seconded by Ravi Respeto. Approved by the board.*

Mr. Markham presented a report (attached) with two items:

* A list of members who have continued to pay for meals even when not attending
* A revised draft of the overdue accounts letter and a draft of a new certified letter to be sent to members prior to taking legal action on overdue accounts.
  + Ms. Respeto noted that the previous Board had discussed relieving members on leave of absence from dues charges as well as meals. Mr. Markham to follow up with Greg MacDonald as this is a bylaws issue.

**Club Service**

No report

**Club Adminstration**

Amy Hart, Director of Club Administration, reported that she is working with Rachel Burns to organize an online happy hour.

**Program Chairs**

Matt Crane, Director of Club Programs, gave the following update:

* The speaker lineup is confirmed through early March, when in-person meetings will resume, including speakers referred by Amrie Grammer, Mr. Daniels, and others. Openings remain for April, May, and June, so Mr. Crane asked for suggestions.
* Mr. Crane raised the question of whether in-person meetings should resume as early as the start of March, when it may still be cold outside. This affects planning for hosting speakers, both in terms of speaker willingness to attend and member attendance levels.
  + Mr. Daniels suggested re-evaluating the specific date of resuming in-person meetings based on weather, the pandemic situation, etc., but wants to keep a firm deadline in place to resume in-person meetings, even if some members won’t be willing to come back yet.

**International / Foundation**

Wayne Murphy, Director of the Rotary Foundation and International Chair, gave the following update:

* The International Committee of the three Charlottesville clubs (Blue Ridge Mountains, Albemarle, Charlottesville) met last week to coordinate donations. Our Club has $3,000 in its International budget and will give up to $1,000 to a selected jointly sponsored project. A list of projects will be presented for the Board’s consideration.
* Other Charlottesville clubs are facing similar issues to Rotary clubs district-wide. They are meeting virtually, but attendance has dropped sharply. District-wide, as many as 50% of clubs may be considering becoming satellite clubs or even giving up their charter.
  + Mr. Daniels raised the question of how to offer assistance to other Charlottesville clubs, up to and including the possibility of merger, and asked Mr. Murphy and Ms. Respeto to think about how to approach this.
  + Ms. Respeto noted that it would be important to position such an offer as how to build the strength of Rotary in the Charlottesville area, and to avoid any club vs. club connotations.

**Public Relations**

No report

**Club Executive Secretary**

No report

There being no further the business the meeting was adjourned at 9:35am.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Markham, Secretary