



## Highlights from the March and April 2020 Rotary International Board of Directors Meetings

The 2019–20 RI Board of Directors met via video conference on 18 March and 21–24 April 2020. At these meetings, the Board reviewed 10 committee reports and recorded 36 decisions.

### COVID-19 Response

#### 25 February Executive Committee Ballot

- The Board agreed to prioritize the health and safety of Rotarians during the COVID-19 outbreak and
  - encouraged districts to follow local government recommendations for gatherings;
  - agreed to allow districts to delay (until no later than 30 June 2020) or to convene online their training events, including PETS and district training assembly, at no cost to Rotary International, should their government recommend restricting gatherings due to COVID-19 or if district leaders feel such action is appropriate;
  - recommended that those districts holding their training meetings online due to the COVID-19 outbreak, hold at least three one-hour meetings to cover 1) Rotary's strategic plan, 2) the role and responsibility of the participant, and 3) goals for the year, and further to follow all other requirements for district training meetings;
  - agreed to allow districts to delay (until no later than 30 June 2020) or cancel their district conference, at no cost to Rotary International, should their government recommend restricting gatherings due to COVID-19 or if district leaders feel such action is appropriate.

#### 18 March Special Virtual Session of the RI Board

The Board canceled the in-person 2020 RI (Honolulu) Convention and approved refunding of registration fees and fees for RI ticketed events to registered attendees.

#### 21–24 April Virtual RI Board Meeting

The Board

- approved holding a virtual convention on 20–26 June 2020;
- agreed to the following general principles:
  - The health and safety of all participants in Rotary programs, meetings, and events is of paramount importance.
  - No in-person meeting or event shall be mandatory for any Rotary participant who may feel uncomfortable attending because of the pandemic.
  - All conveners and organizers of Rotary meetings are strongly encouraged to consider all health concerns in deciding whether to hold in-person meetings.
  - All conveners and organizers of Rotary meetings shall fully comply with all health and safety rules in effect in that location.
- With the principles above in mind, adopted the following rules and guidance for specific Rotary activities:
  1. All RI Board meetings shall be conducted virtually (and not in-person) for the remainder of calendar year 2020.
  2. All RI committee meetings shall be conducted virtually (and not in-person) for the remainder of calendar year 2020.



3. The general secretary shall develop contingency plans for interim report to the Board at its June 2020 meeting:
    - a. to train district governors-elect for those unable to attend in-person the 2021 International Assembly and
    - b. to conduct the 2021 International Assembly virtually in the event more than 40 percent of the governors-elect are unable to attend in-person.
  4. 2020 Rotary Institute conveners are strongly encouraged to conduct their institutes and governor-elect and governor-nominee training virtually. Conveners are authorized to decide whether to conduct such meetings in-person or virtually; however,
    - a. no Rotary staff shall attend an institute, governor-elect, or governor-nominee training in person unless specifically authorized by the general secretary in exceptional circumstances;
    - b. directors shall not be funded to attend an institute that is outside of their zone or region unless specifically authorized by the president;
  5. In fairness to all districts, Rotary International shall not fund the expenses of any president's representative to a district conference for the 2020–21 Rotary year. If a district requests a president's representative, the president may appoint one at no cost to RI.
  6. Governors are strongly encouraged to use virtual meetings for club visits that occur during calendar year 2020.
  7. Regional leaders are strongly encouraged to use virtual meetings for training seminars and other events during calendar year 2020.
  8. The general secretary shall prepare a risk assessment of conducting the Rotary Youth Exchange Program during the 2020–21 Rotary year for report to the Board at its June 2020 meeting.
- requests the president and the president-elect to jointly appoint a nine-member Pandemic Response Task Force to comprehensively study how Rotary can optimally utilize virtual technologies during the COVID-19 pandemic and agreed that the task force's mandate runs through 31 October 2020.

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### **Programs, Meetings, and Awards**

#### **The Board**

- received President-elect Knaack's update on holding a third preconvention event in conjunction with the 2021 RI (Taipei) Convention on Intercountry Committees;
- amended its policy on district conferences to allow for participation of non-Rotarian community leaders in a conference and encouraged governors to hold public-facing events as part of their district conferences;
- amended its policy to provide for Rotaractors to be eligible to receive the Service Above Self Award, and the Avenues of Service Award, and for Rotaract clubs to be eligible to receive the Significant Service Award;



## **Administration and Finances**

### The Board

- agreed to sunset the Rotary Global Rewards program by 1 July 2021;
- broadened the mandate of the Rotary Representatives Network beyond public relations to include helping build connection for humanitarian projects, opening doors to expertise, and helping facilitate engagement at the local level.