

Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting: April 13, 2014

Secretary's Note: Illona R. was invited to our meeting today. She has extensive experience in suicide intervention. Since this is one of the topics for discussion today, her presence is very helpful and appropriate. This discussion was moved to the first item on the agenda to accommodate her and so that she would not have to remain for the rest of the meeting if she should choose to not do so.

It was determined that a quorum of board members was present and the meeting was called to order by Board Chair Joseph Mott at 12 Noon PDT (Joe was elected the new Board Chair at last month's meeting when Craig stepped aside). Also present were: Mahala Kephart, Byron Kerr, Jeff Koch, John Owens, Steve Snyder, Robert Stump, Njon Weinroth, Craig Whalley, Carola Ziermann, and Tim Reith. Illona R. was present, as above.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda this month consisted of the Minutes, the Treasurer's Report, and an Executive Committee Resolution.

A motion was made seconded, and carried unanimously to accept the Minutes and the Treasurer's Report as submitted.

The Executive Committee Resolution regarding behavioral standards of the Board was previously submitted for Board consideration. A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to adopt it as an Internal Board Communication.

Suicide Policy

This discussion proceeded with significant input from our guest:

Its focus was to decide whether to draft a policy regarding perceived suicide threats. Martin B. attended a recent conference in Modesto dealing with this matter and Carola asked for input regarding it for the next Newsletter. Byron has this information and will forward it to her.

Material published by SMART Recovery® regarding suicide threats was discussed. The text is well written and adoption of it was discussed. Njon spoke with the Executive Director of SMART Recovery® who said that he would allow us to use their material provided that appropriate credit was given to its author. It was noted that SMART Recovery® does not have an official policy in this regard but rather written guidelines for their meeting facilitators. It was decided, as SMART Recovery® has done, that LifeRing will not have an official policy, but rather will have guidelines to be distributed to all convenors and members dealing with this matter; having a specific policy in this regard may lead to litigations if the procedures outlined in it were not strictly followed.

LifeRing has a current webpage that provides information on how to deal with suicide threats. The SMART Recovery® material would supplement it. Our webpage currently can be found under "Convenor Resources."

Prior to this meeting, Illona reviewed the SMART Recovery® guidelines document and agreed that it was very good. She agreed that we should use it with author permission as above.

Carola suggested that reminders of these resources might be included in each quarterly newsletter for new members as well as convenors.

Illona continued with a description of her participation in the Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Center. She emphasized that she is not a professional in the field, but rather a trained layperson. She described the step-wise procedure used there in dealing with suicide ideation calls.

Joe moved that we adopt the SMART Recovery® “What Can You Do” document, modified appropriately for LifeRing. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously. It was emphasized that this document will NOT constitute a statement of LifeRing policy.

Illona commented that survivors after suicide is also a significant component of what many suicide prevention centers offer to the public, and we should consider providing this information as well.

Carola will work with Illona to compose material that will be published in the next newsletter. This material will deal with suicide prevention and grief counseling for suicide survivors. Tim will facilitate their dialogue.

Craig suggested that a “Crisis Help” link might be placed prominently on our home page. From there, persons can be connected to resources dealing with suicide and survivor grief issues, as well as other urgent matters.

Old Business

Survey

Mahala distributed the full survey results in an earlier post. Carola will excerpt sections of it for the next newsletter. Mahala will conduct a board workshop session at the upcoming Annual Meeting. Part of the survey might be used to develop a strategic plan; we might consider reaching out to population groups not well represented in the survey responses. She also suggested that the Board should compose an “Executive Summary” of the survey to be published on the website.

The question arose as to how often surveys should be conducted. Mahala suggested that we conduct a convenor survey every other year. Robert warned that we should not expect very much feedback based on limited responses to earlier surveys. Five-year periodicity was thought to be more reasonable.

Annual Meeting

Byron discussed the draft flyer, hoping to circulate it during the week of April 13, at least to government agencies and rehabilitation centers. The latest version was discussed and some modifications to it were suggested.

Election Supervisor

Byron reiterated that Geoffrey L. agreed to serve as the Supervisor, and the Board was reminded that it had previously agreed to this. Geoffrey had some concerns about the “30 Days Prior Actions.” Byron suggested that we invite him the week after Easter to specifically discuss election details and timing.

Robert commented that there are two things that must be done 30 days prior to Congress (that is, by April 30) as stipulated in the Bylaws:

Section 12.4: *The voting method must be decided.*

Section 3.1: *Motions, directives, proposals, bylaw changes, and nominations must be submitted in absentia, and in writing, to the Registrar by delegates that will not be present at the Congress.*

The requirement defined by Section 3.1 does not apply to persons who will be present at the Congress.

Reminders about those items stipulated in Section 3.1 must be posted and distributed now.

Carola said that she is planning to have the newsletter available by May 15 so that it can be distributed at the Conference. Candidate statements cannot be published there since persons declaring their desire to do so in person at the Congress would not be represented. Joe commented that last year we published candidate statements on the website after the Congress, and it was agreed to do so again this year.

Election Voting Procedure

Joe moved that we use the same election voting method as last year. That is, “Ranked Choice Voting – Instant Run-off.”

The motion was seconded and carried eight to one with no abstentions.

Byron said that the main absentee voting problem last year was voter anonymity, but otherwise worked well. Jeff commented that the same results would have been achieved using a plurality method, but he went on to say that problems could arise with this voting method if the number of voters was small.

Website

The discussion was deferred until next month by Njon.

Location for 2015 Annual Meeting

Tim submitted the proposal of the *Ad Hoc* Meeting Location Committee for 2015: The Committee proposed that the subject meeting be held in Salt Lake City, Utah, with the LifeRing Utah Group hosting. The dates proposed were May 29, 30, and 31, 2015. These dates are for the weekend immediately following the Memorial Day weekend, as has traditionally been used in the past. Tim mentioned that Albuquerque declined. Jeff commented that the Los Angeles area would also be attractive, although we do not have a presence there. Carola suggested Sacramento because we do. Robert said, however, that Sacramento has declined for 2015.

Mahala commented that the LifeRing group in Salt Lake was enthusiastic about this location. They now have three meetings with a core group of 12 persons. She also commented that investigations have already started to examine potential venues.

A motion was made to hold the 2015 LifeRing Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City. The motion was seconded and carried by a vote of eight to one with no abstentions.

Byron suggested that it might be advantageous to investigate the granting of Continuing Education Units (CEUs), for the meeting. Njon will pursue.

National Speakers Bureau

There was no further action on this matter, and it will not be pursued.

SOS Logo

Joe discussed a possible infringement issue with Marty, regarding the use by SOS of a “LifeRing” logo. (See last month’s Minutes): It was decided, based on Marty’s advice, that the issue will be allowed to remain as it is, while observing how the future of that organization proceeds. To reiterate, Marty advised to not pursue litigation. He felt that this issue would not provide a strong case and that it would be expensive. It was noted that SOS did achieve its fund raising goal of \$75K last month. Byron commented that a non-confrontational letter should be written to the SOS Organization to state our interest and concerns. Craig will write the letter.

New Business

CAADAC Ad

Joe sent an email to CAADAC to ask if there was a special rate provided by them for non-profit organizations. There was no response. Craig commented that instead of participation we might send emails to therapists and counselors. Joe said that if we had such a mailing list, a good job for a volunteer would present itself. Robert commented that there is activity in this regard on a limited basis in limited communities such as the Denver area. Craig said that the responses to these efforts were low. Mahala asked if we could contact CAADAC to determine the availability of their mailing list. Craig commented that this would probably be costly. Byron will do what he can to reach out to them.

Leading Edge

There was a Board consensus to not pursue this matter.

Adjournment

There being no other business at this time, Joe entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm PDT.

Submitted by Tim Reith

Board Secretary

April 25, 2014