

## **Minutes of the LifeRing Board of Directors Meeting: November 13, 2016**

It was determined that a quorum of board members was present, and the meeting was called to order by Board Chair Njon Weinroth at Noon PDT. The other board members present were: Robert Mullaly, Byron Kerr,, Emily Marcus, Craig Whalley, Carola Ziermann, and Harold Marques. The Executive Director, Robert Stump, was also present. Board Members Dan Carrigan and George Gidora were not present.

### **Public Comments**

There were none.

### **Consent Agenda**

The Consent Agenda was moved, seconded, and carried unanimously as submitted. It consisted of the October 2016 Minutes and was moved, seconded, and carried unanimously to accept the October Minutes as submitted.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report was moved, seconded, and carried unanimously as submitted.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Revenue Committee**

LifeRing did not receive Peter Dodge Foundation Grant, although made final list, and should definitely reapply next year. Byron wrote to Executive Director of Peter Dodge Foundation, thanking him for their consideration and asking how we might improve and/or what direction to take.

Byron and Carola are working on 3-4 other grant options: including the Kaiser Foundation Grant, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Clif Bar Family Foundation, which is a local Bay area foundation with \$7000 maximum grant. Goal is to start with smaller grants and build from there: obtaining grants will ultimately give LifeRing more recognition, not just money.

Now that Grant ApplicationTool is in place we should be able to move forward on searching for and applying for grants. Appeal to Board members re: any leads on other foundations and companies/corporations to approach. Seeking volunteers to chip in on grant writing and putting together applications.

### **Member Support**

Craig reports that a page is being worked up on website for "Success Stories"; relatively brief stories of success by members.

## Convenors and Potential Convenors (PC's)

Working to refine forms to be used by Regional Representatives/Potential Convenors. Current PC packages would benefit from being streamlined as they are overwhelming to prospective convenors. On website, there's a great deal of densely packed information also needing a streamlined redesign so that PC's can go to one place to get most of their information and questions answered. Goal is to make PC page on website more interactive, interesting, and to the point.

## **Advisory Committee**

Clarification of intent/mission of Advisory Committee: LifeRing Bylaws state that a Professional Advisory Committee needs to be set up that would advise us when it comes to professional manners when interfacing with organizations and professionals in treatment organizations. Njon has reached out to Advisory Committee members but has received very little response. On hold for now,

## **LifeRing Press**

Lisa should have editing complete by early January 2017. Working title is "Humanly Possible". Marty is working on third book to be put on Creative Space which can be printed on demand.

## **External Outreach**

Byron has been in touch with Mahala and has vision of how responsibilities can be split. Mahala has strong ability to reach out at national level and should continue this while Byron will focus more on regional, state and local levels. On the regional level, he is meeting on Thanksgiving week with Azure Acres in Sonoma County. Significance is that it is part of CRC Health, the largest rehab company nationally, if not internationally, and Azure Acres is one of their flagship operations.

## **Administrative Committee**

No new updates.

## **Annual Conference Ad Hoc Committee**

Carola shares two proposals for how to go forward with Annual Meeting/Congress in 2017 in effort to cut costs/time:

### Proposal #1

Two day meeting with convenor training, leadership building along with social aspect of dinner/banquet. No speaker but can offer free dinner for attendees of the convenor workshops in order to bring people in and make them feel like part of the LifeRing community. Propose a weekend in Spring 2017. One day could be Board development with planning for the coming year, i.e. a Board "Retreat". Annual Congress would

include convenor workshops. Bylaws explicitly state that we need to have a Congress within the Annual Meeting. Emphasis on attracting all Board members but also regional representatives. Explore how to offer financial assistance with expenses, which goes hand-in-hand with grant applications.

Convenor training should be led by LR members. Two possible people: for the Board Retreat, Carola recommends Fred Alder, who is very active convenor in SF area, and for Convenor Workshops suggest asking Dan Carrigan.

Suggest filming the Convenors Workshop, posting on YouTube as well as on LR website for potential convenors to be able to view.

### Proposal #2

One day meeting with emphasis on Congress, leadership building and Board development, and including a social event, either lunch or dinner on a Saturday or Sunday in San Francisco area. Morning would include Annual Congress and afternoon Board development/planning for coming year. Both cost-and-time cutting. Recommend finding other opportunities for regional representative to participate.

Discussion re: wording of convenor “trainings”. May be preferable to call “workshop” instead, which opens it up to people participating who don’t necessarily want to be convenors and encourages the exchange of ideas as opposed to the talking-down implied by the word “training”. Agreement on use of word “workshop”.

These proposals are for 2017 only, while planning for the future and addressing how to increase participation and attendance. Point is raised that one can consider the costs to be an investment in the future; by spending money to get LifeRing’s name out and increase exposure. It’s LifeRing’s one and only self-promotional event. Point also raised that the expense of having the meeting in major metropolitan area like San Francisco may also affect attendance due to cost.

Motion made for Proposal #1. It was seconded and carried unanimously with Byron abstaining.

### **Fundraising Committee**

Richard Campbell sent out version of annual appeal to email groups to test the waters, but it was around week of elections so email groups were pretty quiet. Richard is working with Carola around the timing to send out appeal to all LifeRing members. Also working on donor page on website, offering different levels of giving. All is on schedule.

Two other budget items re: streaming media for possible Congress and video for convenors workshops. Need to consider the issues raised by filming anything: obtaining permission from participants, consider that some may not want to be filmed.

## **Public Comments**

There were none.

## **Additional Activity**

### **Old Business**

Status of Chat: conclusion is that the old 1-2-3 platform is dead in the water. Looking at alternatives such as platforms that potentially use plug-ins, that would work with Wordpress so could launch directly from webpages. Also looking at transition to more streaming-type platforms. Will have more info by next meeting. All will be mobile friendly.

### **New Business**

#### **Ad Hoc**

Carola proposes changing Board Chair position term from one year to possibly a three-year term instead. Three year commitment would be more efficient, would put “face” to the position, and provide more continuity overall. Would not require Bylaw changes; no requirement in bylaws to rotate the Chair. Propose the change in Board Chair term be effective with next Board election in 2017. Njon recommends chair position be for two years, with a vice-chair who would then step into Chair position. Propose further discussion offline and bring to vote at future Board meeting. May be useful to form a committee to look at other organizations and see how they handle Chair terms in order to reach consensus more efficiently.

### **Prison Outreach**

Recent increase in requests for LifeRing materials. Working with a prisoner, Mykel, at Elmwood Prison who is very enthusiastic and has started LifeRing meeting with fifteen attendees. Craig proposes giving box of 28-30 books. Byron suggests it be half dozen or maybe ten. The jail itself has been very difficult to work with, appears to be stalling: he has been making effort over past four years to get security clearance and gain access and is getting nowhere.

## **Adjournment**

A motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:22 PDT.

*Submitted by Tim Reith  
LifeRing Interim Board Secretary  
December 10, 2016*