



## **LIFERING SECULAR RECOVERY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2023**

### ***CALL TO ORDER AND IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC ATTENDEES***

The meeting was called to order by Sue at 9:00am Pacific Time.

#### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Sue Betts (Chair/Interim ED)
- Bobbi Campbell
- Joe Franklin
- Lisa Swing-Corney
- Monica Foy
- Rafal Klopotoski
- Mary Beth O'Connor
- Njon Sanders
- Robert Stump

\*Rafal Klopotoski had to excuse himself from part of the meeting to help commence an online LifeRing meeting, and then returned. His brief absence was noted and approved by Sue.

#### **NON-BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- Kemper M.
- Michael T.

#### **ABSENT BOARD MEMBERS:**

No BOD members were absent.

### **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**August Minutes:** Robert Stump made a motion to adopt as presented. Mary Beth O'Connor had a concern about the use of the word "strident" in reference to our current sobriety policy, which was discussed and language in question ultimately changed to "changing the language." Sue Betts made a motion to adopt as amended, Mary Beth seconded.

**VOTE:** Sue verbally confirmed Unanimous Approval. \*

\*Njon Sanders suggested using "Yes" and "No" buttons in Chat to vote with instead of verbal "Aye", "Nay" and raising hands saying that the minutes secretary should be able to see them in the meeting recording, making it easier for them to count all the votes that way, and those buttons were used to vote throughout the meeting. However, those are not visible in the recording, therefore, votes in these minutes will be noted via verbal confirmation as stated by Sue.

**July Profit and Loss Statement:** Per Sue, Lisa Swing-Corney noted a discrepancy which Robert Stump corrected.

Sue requested a motion to adopt the report as amended, and Joe Franklin made it. Monica Foy seconded.

**VOTE:** Sue verbally noted all except Robert, who abstained as he had made the correction to the report, approved the statement.

**August Profit and Loss Statement:** No discrepancies or issues were reported.

**VOTE:** Sue requested a motion to approve. Joe made a motion, Rafael Kloptowski seconded. Sue verbally noted all except Robert, who abstained as he wrote the report, approved the statement.

## **ONGOING BUSINESS**

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY:** Reminded the following people that she still has not received their signed copies: Monica, Joe, Bobbi, Rafael, and Mary Beth, and that these need to be sent to her ASAP.

**BOARD SECRETARY STILL NEEDED:** Sue states there is someone who's shown interest in becoming the Secretary but has not yet committed and hopes the position will be filled by next month. Sue did the August minutes and asked for a volunteer to do this month's minutes. Bobbi Campbell volunteered.

**RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ENTITIES:** Mary Beth and Lisa met with Cooley, who said they need to reach out to those in the firm with more expertise in order to give us a robust answer to our questions regarding governance and structure and will need about 30 days to get back to us.

**MARY BETH'S OUTREACH UPDATE:** Mary Beth was a keynote speaker, held a LifeRing meeting, and did a presentation about LifeRing to about 35 people, which was more than last year, at the CCAR Conference in Des Moines, Iowa. She was also able to sell several books using our credit card reader at her table, which made it easier to sell more of them. She also met a woman from Yale Public Health who wanted a recording about LifeRing they can put on their website, and Mary Beth gave her one she'd previously created. Next CCAR Conference will be next summer in Connecticut.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Change in P&L Reporting**

Robert requested a change in reporting per a recent meeting of the new Financial Committee, composed of Joe and Monica as well as Sue and sometimes Lisa and which is meeting every other Thursday at 3:00, from 33 pages to something simpler and more manageable. The Financial Committee would still review the entire report but notify the Board they've done so by presenting a smaller report which would still contain all the pertinent information the BOD wants and needs to see. The BOD would still also have access to the larger report should anyone

wish to review it. Nothing has yet been created, but the Financial Committee is working on it and will present a sample document to the BOD for approval in the next couple of months.

*Michael T. enters the meeting.*

### **Definitions**

A lengthy discussion regarding the development of a universal language using LifeRing definitions of sobriety, recovery, which would be used to remove any ongoing confusion or misunderstandings around what we mean when we also use other terms such as “MAT”, “harm reduction”, “moderation”, “abstinence”, and others as defined by us. A document has been created, which Sue brought forth for review.

Among many thoughts and concerns discussed by several BOD members on this topic, the gist of the conversation was as thus:

Njon asked what the intent of this document would be, or how it would be used, and Sue clarified that it would be a glossary of terms we would also place on our website for review. Njon expressed concern and cautioned that we should be mindful of what we publish in light of past experiences of people using things on our website or other documentation against us or latching on to particular terms to our detriment. This is a legacy that will have an impact on us moving forward.

Mary Beth feels that a glossary of terms may not be necessary and carries too many negative potential conflicts, however, Roberts thinks we still need a common language in LSR that we can use to dialogue amongst ourselves and have something to point to if anyone has questions about what we meant by using them. Njon feels that we still shouldn't try to adhere to definitions as LifeRing is comprised of a diverse group of individuals who have defined sobriety on their own terms and doesn't feel we should be trying to create an official or concrete definition.

Michael T. came to the meeting to discuss calling the “sober curious” meeting he's proposed something more like a “Motivation for Change” meeting, given the controversy surrounding the terms previously used in the Convenors List discussions to date.

Sue asked what we want to do, and Kemper M. mentioned that if we were to take the discussion to a town hall setting, having a list of definitions would be helpful and useful, but then the question of whether a town hall would even be necessary if, as Michael proposes, he would present any definitions he used in the meeting as his own rather than LifeRing's, making a list of terms unnecessary altogether.

The general thought is that if the fear of having a list of terms to reference in a town hall setting would create further controversy or derision, town halls tend to be more respectful and constructive than conversations on the Convenors List.

It was noted that having a Town Hall on this topic was approved unanimously at a prior meeting, however, as the discussion in this meeting would have continued for a much longer length of time than allotted, Sue moves to change the forum to email so it could be conducted in an ongoing, possibly daily basis as opposed to waiting until the monthly meeting to discuss and asks for a show of hands to approve.

**VOTE:** Sue verbally confirms unanimous approval to move the discussion to an email form.

### **Sobriety Policy Update**

Started as a part of a committee in 2021 to address past concerns re: what is our official stance on what we allow or support as part of our sobriety policy - i.e., MAT, relapses, etc. - so as not to be confused with extraneous definitions on the part of various individuals “representing” LifeRing’s stances.

Mary Beth expressed concerns that the new Policy as currently written would not be consistent with our by-laws and articles and will need to be run by Cooley to be sure. At the very least, we need to ensure that our policy reflects already published statements, such as in “Empowering Our Sober Selves” and other literature and materials, but that it is also current and accurate.

Sue wants to know how we can get this reviewed and completed? Old vs. New? A line-by-line comparison was created for review, but that might not be how everyone would like to review it. Bobbi mentioned sending out both the original document and the new document in their entirety and letting people review them in those formats.

Sue will send out links to both documents, and hopefully get a completed draft to Cooley for review. This may set us back a bit further, but it’s still closer to being finalized than not. Mary Beth will address her concerns with them and hopefully that will help move it along. Having it on board will be helpful during the proposed Town Hall re: definitions so that Michael T. can then start his proposed meeting.

Mary Beth thinks that perhaps the policy language and the meeting issue are potentially 2 separate issues, and Michael agreed that they could be separated by removing the paragraph re: sober curious meetings so the Town Hall and then hopefully his proposed meeting could move forward regardless of where the policy issue lies.

*Lorraine H. enters the meeting.*

Sue agrees with removing the paragraph as suggested and that we can move forward on both.

Michael also talks about another purpose for his proposing his meeting is his study of motivational interviewing, and learning how to find the best ways to help people change.

*Michael T. exits from the meeting.*

### **Comeau Family Foundation Grants**

Lorraine H. reports that in addition to the \$20,000 donation we received from the foundation last November, they were so impressed and happy to learn how we were using that money they will be donating another \$20,000 to us again this November!

### **Director of Development Report**

Lorraine discusses what she's been working on since taking on the role of Director of Development:

- She's been cultivating a relationship with Katie, a Nurse Practitioner in Denver who used LifeRing for her own recovery support system and recommended us to her family, who run the Comeau Family Foundation, for the initial \$20,000 donation.
- Last year, we sent her LifeRing swag as a thank you for her help in receiving the donation. This year, Lorraine suggested that we could make a video compiled of LSR people and a new list of uses for the additional funds.

Sue also proposed forming a new Comeau Fund Committee to develop new goals to use this recent donation for.

- Lorraine has been spending a lot of time researching further grant opportunities, as well as coming up with ideas for internal fundraising and development activities. Mary Beth mentioned that SMART Recovery has gotten all manner of government grants and suggests looking into how they've done it in case there's something we can copy or model our own grant opportunities on. In that regard, Sue also mentions that changing to a 990 Long Tax Form will also help us when seeking grants.

### **Community Code of Conduct and Policy Review**

Per Lisa, there's currently a Pop-Up committee working on LifeRing's Community Code of Conduct, and she was speaking to our insurance company for guidance about what policies we should have in place to reduce risk. For example, they wanted to know why we had a "Predator Policy" in place, but that's something that will probably be folded into the Code of Conduct.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Lisa presented the link to a web page with information re: ageism, which will be added to our ongoing DEI document on our G Drive.

### **High Level Review of Finances**

Joe Franklin presented the August P&L report, which shows we are still in the black with the addition of the latest donations, including the new Comeau Foundation funds. As the newest Treasurer, Joe is still familiarizing himself with all aspects of our finances and mentions that some of the new funding will help pay for a much-needed audit of them.

## **LIFERING TEAM REPORTS**

Current teams and projects updated as a report for BOD review as opposed to a discussion for the sake of meeting brevity. It's updated monthly and the BOD can access it anytime.

### **Regional Reps**

Per Lisa, reps meet quarterly, and the most recent meeting in August was a special meeting focusing on a couple of issues reps brought forward in reports.

The first issue was about some meetings in Colorado that are struggling and the other about some of the email groups being overwhelmed while others were struggling. Solutions were discussed and some are being acted upon. The next quarterly meeting will be in November.

At the request of the E-Groups Rep Craig Whalley and its convenor Margit H., for the benefit of the new BOD members, Lisa talked about the LifeRing Forum and suggested everyone stop by and take a look: <http://forums.delphiforums.com/lifering>

### **Adjournment of Public BOD Business Meeting**

Sue makes a motion to adjourn the public board business meeting. Monica Foy seconds motion.

**VOTE:** Sue verbally confirms Unanimous Approval. The public board business meeting closed at 10:49 AM Pacific Daylight Time.

## **LIFERING PUBLIC FORUM**

**Kemper:**

1. Trying to stay involved, and reminding others in his meetings to get involved, as well.
2. On October 7<sup>th</sup> he'll be doing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Rescue RingUnion in his hometown of Rescue, California and has sent Sue an invite blurb to put on the website and he'll also send an invite to the Convenors List for anyone in the area who wants to show up. Last year there were about 30 attendees, and this year they'll be doing belly flops in the pool for donations!

Close of LifeRing Public Forum: 11:52 AM Pacific DaylightTime

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No Executive Session was held.

Respectfully submitted on September 28, 2023 by Bobbi Campbell