

LIFERING SECULAR RECOVERY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES SUNDAY OCTOBER 8, 2023

CALL TO ORDER AND IDENTIFICATION OF PUBLIC ATTENDEES

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

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Sue Betts
- Bobbi Campbell
- Mary Beth O'Connor
- Rafal Klopotoski
- 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:

- Ewa C.
- Ric R.
- Kemper M.
- Mark F.
- Jose R.
- Anna B. joined around 9:15am
- Mary S.

ABSENT BOARD MEMBERS:

- Njon Sanders
- Lisa Swing-Corney
- Joe Franklin
- Monica Foy

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

SEPTEMBER MINUTES: Sue Betts made a motion to adopt as presented. Mary Beth seconded.

VOTE: Sue verbally confirmed Unanimous Approval.

SEPTEMBER PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT: Mary Beth questioned the format of September's P&L statement, noting that it was a much shorter version than customary; and that, although the Finance Committee had proposed a shorter version, it had not actually been voted on. Sue noted that she had reviewed the shorter version and appreciated how it concisely summarized the P&L statement. Mary Beth expressed a preference for the longer, more detailed version. Some discussion ensued with the possibility of using the shorter version while simultaneously attaching the bank statement for Board Members' review, with an informal consensus that this would be an acceptable solution.

VOTE: Sue requested a motion to table the vote until November, when the bank statement can be attached for review. Rafael Kloptowski seconded. Sue verbally noted Unanimous Approval to table the vote until November 2023.

ONGOING BUSINESS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY: Still awaiting signed copy from Rafal, who will submit 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. Ewa C. is doing this month's minutes.

RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ENTITIES: Mary Beth reminds the Board that when she and Lisa met with Cooley, they were informed that Cooley needed to reach out to three people in the firm with more expertise in order to provide a more robust answer to questions regarding governance and structure.

Mary Beth states she touched base with them before the Board Meeting; however, one of the three people with the necessary expertise has been out for two weeks. They hope to get it to us by our next Board meeting.

MARY BETH'S OUTREACH UPDATE: Thank you to Mary Beth for all the LifeRing outreach she has been providing, including her podcasts, which often mention LifeRing. Mary Beth has a speaking engagement on October 13th, at a humanist, free thinkers organization which does litigation for freedom from religion. She is also traveling to Canada where she is the keynote speaker at a couple of fundraisers. Mary Beth has also been lawyer training, and as part of the training she always includes LifeRing as one of the peer support options.

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.

DEFINITIONS: No new updates.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING SOBRIETY POLICY UPDATE: Sue brings up for review LifeRing's current policy statement which states that we respect the relationship between individuals and their healthcare providers; and that medications and supplements *prescribed*, and taken as instructed, can be part of an individual's personal recovery plan, and does not conflict with the person's commitment to abstinence.

Sue proposes making the language more specific, since items such as OTC meds, vitamins and supplements are not necessarily prescribed, but may be approved for use by a healthcare provider who is fully informed that the individual is in recovery from SUD. After some discussion, the word "*recommended*" was proposed as an alternative to "*prescribed*".

Finally, with regards to the sentence, "We can only share what worked for us, using I statements, and we don't use the word should" (in relation to not judging people when they lapse). Sue feels the sentence ends flatly and would like to tie it into community support through LifeRing. Ric proposes using the word "instead" to tie the sentences together as follows: "We can only share what worked for us, using 'I' statements, and we don't use the word 'should'. Instead, we encourage people to create their own recovery plan and use LifeRing's community support to realize those goals."

Bobby makes a motion to approve the new language. Robert seconded the motion. At this time, however, we do not have a full quorum so will table until Rafal returns.

TOWN HALL: Sue reports that she had an email exchange with Michael Toal, who originally proposed creating a Town Hall meeting in order to afford the LifeRing community the opportunity to discuss his proposal for creating a separate, un-chartered LifeRing meeting aimed at people who are new, unsure about their commitment to sobriety; and, optionally, people who are struggling to maintain abstinence. The proposed name for the meeting is "Motivation for Change". The meeting would endeavor to explore what discussions need to happen in order to support a person, who may still be ambivalent, to commit to abstinence. The

Town Hall is to allow sharing of views and to determine if the LifeRing community is comfortable with adding this type of meeting. Sue notes that this is not entirely novel for LifeRing, since we have previously hosted gatherings for the “sober curious”; however, this is a more formalized meeting. Sue believes the meeting is un-chartered because it does not fall within LifeRing’s articles of incorporation and its bylaws. Mary Beth raises the question re: why this would be in conflict with LifeRing’s articles. given the goal of the meeting being to help individuals ultimately move towards abstinence. Sue notes the “unchartered” issue arose in earlier conversations, and may be obsolete.

Sue asks all present if they feel that having a Town Hall meeting is a good idea, or whether it should be decided by the Board. Ric states that he feels a Town Hall meeting is essential, since everyone in the LifeRing community brings their own interpretation of the language based on their own personal recovery experience, and many are passionate about this very topic. Given the diverse nature of the LifeRing community, the Town Hall meeting would be a way to present the question respectfully to all, with consideration of the diversity within the LifeRing community. Anna asks what the goal of the Town Hall meeting is, and Sue replies that the goal is to offer the LifeRing community an opportunity to air their opinions, while also giving Michael T. a chance to present his proposal for the meeting and answer any questions. Anna expresses her view that the more narrow the goal for the Town Hall meeting, the more likely it will have a successful outcome. Mary Beth proposes that Anna moderate the discussion at the Town Hall and Anna agrees to do so. Ric suggests that Board members should not moderate the Town Hall due to the possible community perception that a decision is being driven by the Board. Ric volunteers to assist in the moderation for the Town Hall meeting. Will wait to discuss with Michael T. Bobbi also reminds all present that Anna is not currently a member of the Board. Sue feels that further discussion should be tabled until Michael T. can be present.

COMEAU FAMILY FOUNDATION GRANTS: Sue refreshes everyone’s memory about a woman who was a member of LifeRing, whose wealthy aunt left her some money. When this woman passed away, she chose to donate some of the money to LifeRing. Her initial donation was \$20,000. Since then, she has donated another \$20,000. Sue expresses hope that this may turn out to be an annual contribution.

Sue notes, with gratitude, that this relationship has been cultivated by our Director of Development, Lorraine Hall. Sue states that LifeRing now needs to begin spending the money. One of the ways the money can be used is to redesign LifeRing’s website. Robert provides information re: potential expenditures related to a website redesign, and adds that he has promising leads with M.T. Edinburgh, Scotland. Their quote was approximately \$18-20K. Robert also reports that he spoke with someone locally who is willing to work with LifeRing. He is experienced in working with non-profit organizations, and his price is reasonable: \$5000, but because LifeRing is a non-profit organization, the cost would actually be \$2500.00. He can do a mock up of an improved version of our site. In addition, he would like to see a couple of websites that we would like to emulate, plus he would be able to work in stages with us as our needs change. Some discussion ensues re: making the website more inviting and accessible.

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT REPORT: Project updates captured in Development Report.

COMMUNITY CODE OF CONDUCT AND POLICY REVIEW: Team is moving away from code of conduct model to develop values in alignment with LifeRing philosophy, fundamentals and 2023-2024 Strategic Plan.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION: Lisa not in attendance. Sue brought forward an article about Weight Stigmatization and invited directors to familiarize themselves with its message.

HIGH LEVEL REVIEW OF FINANCES: Treasurer Joe Franklin not in attendance. Review tabled for November BOD meeting.

LIFERING TEAM REPORTS

LIFERING TEAMS: Teams project updates captured in Monthly Status Report

REGIONAL REPS: Regional Reps Global Coordinator Lisa Swing-Corney not in attendance. No updates.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING SOBRIETY POLICY UPDATE: Rafal rejoins the meeting and reviews the proposed changes to the Sobriety Policy Statement. Sue motions to approve to adopt the language revisions to the Sobriety Policy Statement. Rafal seconds the motion.

VOTE: Sue verbally confirms Unanimous Approval.

ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC BOD BUSINESS MEETING: Sue makes a motion to adjourn the public board business meeting.

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

LIFERING PUBLIC FORUM

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was held.

Item: Ensuring privacy protection for YPRs

Respectfully submitted on November 4, 2023 by Ewa Conroy