HumanistsMN Board Meeting

February 12 2025

Location: zoom

6:00-7:45

Present: Ellie Haylund (president), Audrey Kingstrom, Nick Haylund, John Walker (treasurer), Suzanne Perry, Paul Rupp, Mitch Thompson (vice president), Stephanie Schwinn (secretary), Jerry Smith, Abigail Jackson, Kazi Ahmed Habib

A. Call to order (Ellie)
B. Approval of secretary's minutes
    a. Mitch moved to approve
    b. Nick seconded
    c. Motion carried
C. Treasurer's report
    a. Cost of Membership Works will be increasing because we had to increase its capacity due to increased membership
    b. Discrepancy between Quick books balance and checking account partially resolved by moving funds designated for staff back to checking. Further investigation will be conducted by the finance team to identify other issues.
    c. Mitch suggested we find someone with experience bookkeeping to assist at some point in the future
    d. Treasurer's report will not be approved until this is resolved
D. New business
    a. Jerry, who is leaving the board, has been helping to create and manage the budget. Members will meet with Jerry to review our process.

b. Review of Religious Freedom Day (Suzanne): well attended, highest donation, good publicity, good reviews. Continue with Religious Freedom Day versus Day of Reason. Religious Freedom Day is federally recognized which could aid in getting a proclamation from the governor. Do a one-day event, including inviting a nationally recognized speaker, with several components instead of 2 days. HMN and MN Atheists have taken turns hosting solstice which would be close to Religious Freedom Day. ACTION: Ellie will notify MN Atheists.
c. American Atheists conference and happy hour 3rd weekend in April
    i. Audrey, Mitch and Paul are coordinating with American Atheists. HumanistsMN's Community Gathering is the same day so HMN will not have our Community Gathering in order to encourage our members to support their conference. Mitch is coordinating our tabling. We'll need volunteers Friday, Saturday and Sunday for tabling. Tablets can attend for free.
d. Ukraine Family sponsorship
    i. The family HMN helped sponsor needs to change their status due to the current federal administrations policies in order to remain in the country. They will be meeting with an attorney to assist them. Christine Retkwa created a Go Fund Me to help raise the funds for the lawyer's fees. She also emailed members of the social action committee and create a social media campaign.
    ii. Pride (Audrey, Mitch and Paul): The AHA conference will be in Chicago the same weekend and a number of people who table at Pride may be going to it. Registration is paid. Pride is not providing tents so we may need to rent one. ACTION: Mitch will assist in getting a tent.

iii. (Suzanne) Summit for Religious Freedom sponsored by Americans United for Separation of Church and State. They've asked us to sponsor. Marcy has been researching this $300 sponsorship gets 4 free virtual tickets, are listed on the website as sponsor and on the slide deck at the conference. This conference can be useful in our program planning, networking and relationship building. Ellie moved to approve $300 sponsorship.Mitch seconded. Motion carried. Suzanne will follow up.

iv. (Suzanne) Katherine Stewart event author whose expertise in Christian Nationalism. Christians Against Christian Nationalism is bringing her in to speak on 04/26. Opportunity to collaborate. . $100 for sponsorship/tabling. Mitch moved. Audrey seconded. Motion carried.

v. (Mitch) Project management/collaboration tool to assist in event planning etc. (Base Camp e.g) Allows us to create institutional memory that is transferable to new board members for HMN. Subscription $11 per month. Questions about communication tools, storage of documents, tracking action items. Mitch signed up for the free trial and will invite everyone as collaborators.

E. Membership
    a. 444 Currently, continues growing
    b. New member orientation
    c. Meeting in a box, event facilitator training
F. Nominating committee (Mitch, Christine, and Audrey)
    a. Vetting and asking potential candidates
    b. Have to announce candidates in March
G. Marketing (Ellie and Suzanne)
    a. Nothing new to report
H. Humanists in Action

    a. Some upcoming rallies to support various causes at the legislature
    b. ACLU is changing their advocacy approach

I. DEI advisory committee (Audrey)
    a. Creating a facilitator training to standardize practices for HMN

J. Programming
    a. (Jerry)- Should HMN sponsor a garden this year through Open Arms? They are experiencing budget reductions due to the current federal administrations cuts and are having to cut staff. They have different levels of sponsorship and do have corporate donors. TBD.
    b. (Audrey)- SMART Recovery is having weekly meetings now with attendance of 12-15 people. They will be contributing $150 monthly to HMN. Their current leader hopes eventually to have meetings for friends and family of people in recovery. This Saturday for the Community Gathering Fish Stark the executive director of AHA is our speaker. He's not asking for any honorarium so HMN and First Unitarian Society will be helping to cover his travel expenses. Use QR code for donations, online chat solicitation for donations, use index cards for questions instead of microphone. Paul, Suzanne, Mitch and Nick will assist. Host duties are organized.

K. Staff fundraising
    a. Talk to Nicole, deputy director of AHA for assistance with future planning

L. Move to adjourn by Mitch, seconded by Suzanne. Motion carried