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www.SeattleAtheists.org

Seattle Atheists Board Meeting October 17, 2010

Location: Shellie's work site (3325 S. 116th Street, Ste 161, Tukwila, WA 98168)

Board Members in attendance:

Shellie Brighton – President

Rich Lyons – Vice President

Liz Frost – Treasurer

Jami Blackann – Member at Large, temporary Secretary for the day

Ranjan Banerji – Member at Large

Deanna Lyons – Member at Large

Mary Keiser – Member at Large

Jerry Schiffelbein – Member at Large

Other Members in attendance:

John Keiser

Meeting start time: 2:07 p.m.

Shellie gives an introduction and talks about how the last board was run. General consensus to run things more formally, but we can discuss just how formal or informal we want to be.

Minutes Approval: Tabled until the former secretary makes them available.

Treasurer's Report:

Current Balance: \$1,0896.78

280 members

- 195 of those members are current
- 34 members who have not renewed membership between 0 and 6 months
- 48 members between 6 months and 1 year
- 3 members more than a year
- Jerry removed 10 members who were way longer than a year.

Jerry, former Treasurer, is still trying to get Shellie and Liz on account, which has been a complicated process. They need to present the bank with meeting minutes, which haven't been posted yet, and they also need the current Secretary, Allison Bond, to be there in person as well. They will try to get it finished next week.

Reminder to put everyone's phone numbers in their cell phones. We noticed that we currently do not have Allison's number.

Unable to register for U-district street fair. Their website still says 2010.

Old/Ongoing Business

- Survey to send out to membership – The Secretary will handle this.
- Downtown Mailbox. Not easy for Shellie to get to. Deanna will take care of this since she lives and works downtown. Jerry gives her the code for the padlock.
- Newsletters should be sent out at least 1 week prior to membership meetings. Shellie would like to send out the next one Halloween week, but she needs content. Newsletter will have a calendar of upcoming events, including events from other organizations.
- Website needs to be updated with fresh content. Still needs pictures of the current board. Jami will create a Wordpress account for Shellie (and whoever else needs one). Content responsibilities: President, VP, and Secretary.
- Memberships, renewals and reminders – This should be the Secretary's role.
- Bus Ad Campaign proposal – Shellie will contact Amanda about this.
- Meetup, Facebook, MySpace: These need to be updated as well. Case will take care of meetups, as this also makes financial sense.
- Thank You notes to speakers at meetings – Shellie will handle.
- Food Donations to Northwest Harvest: There are several drop-off points in and around Seattle. Ranjan recommends UPS stores, since we can weigh the food. Shellie will do this.
- Additional Treasurer responsibilities: Mailbox payment, emailed automatically. Liz will look into this. Booth registration. Refreshments. Taxes. Annual report. 990N. Public storage unit. Jerry will help Liz with the transition.
- Simon's membership fee waived because he's storing FSM.
- VP responsibilities: *Stranger* ads. We need to get on this. \$500 per quarter. We also need a new stock of bumper stickers and emblems from evolvefish.com. Take a look at new stuff on their site, and contact Randy Rumley for guidance.
- Jami has volunteered to handle button supplies. She needs to get the materials from Megan and Kyle.
- Members at Large will be responsible for inventory taking. Jerry and Randy have keys to storage unit. Mary should have a key.
- Ranjan and Jerry will represent at NWFC.
- Darwin Day hall rental: Shellie, VP, Deanna. We will try to rent it for Sunday, February 13 at the Kirkland location. Rents by the hour, and you must register in person.

Committee Reports:

A Committee Fair is scheduled for the next meeting.

Education Committee: Ranjan.

He talked to Eliza. They put together the Atheism 101 pamphlet, and he wants to work on other copy. Annual Goal: To have a role to play in the Events Committee. Expand pool of information and freshen up what we do have. There also needs to be a larger website presence. There's

currently no kid material, which is a big gap. Given Becky's education and interests, she should join this committee. Ranjan will send aliases and subscribing info to relevant people.

Events Committee: Deanna.

- Gift wrapping is being handled by Megan. She informed the board that there's a new contact at the downtown Borders, and this person is unfamiliar with the process of signing up volunteer groups. Megan has not yet signed us up for any shifts; she's waiting for the board to decide which days they want. This needs to be done immediately to ensure SA gets the prime shifts, with Christmas Eve being the most desired day.
- KUOW pledge drive fell through this fall due to an email snafu. The next drive is in March, and Deanna should contact them in January. Also considering the Tacoma pledge drive at Pacific Lutheran University. It would be excellent to get SA's events on their calendar of events—free advertising.

Member Relations Committee: Jerry.

Jerry will continue to handle this for the time being. Add value to becoming a member: Do we want to revamp the member packets? Provide merchandise? We need better coordination with the Secular Student Alliance (national) and Secular Student Union (local).

Public Relations Committee: Shellie.

Nothing new to report. Rich wants to be on the committee, as this is his specialty. Mike will still do press releases (though this is separate from public relations).

Web Committee: John.

- John needs to meet with Sam to figure things out. He's still in information-gathering mode.
- Currently the website is outdated. The new constitution has not been posted. Still need pictures of the new board. There needs to be a new Featured Member – Jami will handle this.
- Website should be administered more tightly. Call it Web/IT.
- Move Access database so multiple board members can access it. In previous years it's resided on Jerry's local machine.
- Forums transition from Yahoo groups to website. Want discussions and forums on SA real estate. Branding. Centralized/more organized, topics in sequence. Yahoo, on the other hand, is a giant mailing list. Transitioning to a website forum would give us separate threads for each topic.
- Central RSS calendar that Sam has been working on – mostly automated. John will ask how much progress has been made.
- Possible three-column layout?

New Business:

- Child Care for membership meetings? Is there enough interest? We would need something secure. The 2100 Building has other rooms. Rich will call them and look into this possibility. We would need someone certified who will be with the kids during the meetings. Also need entertainment for kids—games, DVDs. Mary would love to come up with some projects. We should network with Atheist Parenting Meetups. Rich reminds us

that we'll need to do a background check on the caretaker. Might be worth it to go through an agency. Mary will do research on this.

- Secular Student Union (UW) representation? They meet on Mondays at 5:30 p.m. Shellie recommends having one of our board members attending bi-weekly or monthly. Rich suggests getting member from SSU to come to our meetings. Shellie will send them an email about trying our groups together.
- How to we add value to membership? Possibilities: Charge for membership meetings and have SA members pay less; offer free or discounted merchandise like mugs and T-shirts. We need a financial model. Also, provide a list of committees people can join to encourage participation.
- How to handle address and membership changes. Jerry takes care of database. Amanda was working on an exit survey over the summer, to be sent out individually. Phone call would be more personal. Board members could contact exiting members about why they're leaving. In the email renewal reminders, it was suggested to have Paypal buttons right in the email, rather than linking to the website and creating extra steps. Jerry will send Shellie whole list of lapsed members, and Shellie will randomly assign board members to contact people by phone. The board will take notes on why members aren't renewing. Member relations committee should handle this once we get data.
- Seattle Marathon, November 28. People to hand out water—we need lots of volunteers. Deanna can go to the class. Shellie will forward info. They also need marshals to direct runners. Bring SA T-shirts.
- Facebook and Myspace: John is looking into this, and Shellie will contact Amanda for more information.
- Book by Brian Baker. *From Faith to Reason*. He wants to share it with our members. We need to get a copy of the book for library and reviews.
- Spokane Ordinance issue for Lutheran church expanding parking lot. Church is taking over space that people thought was public. Church is using religion to bully, and state seemed to be afraid to say no. Separation of church/state issue. We should make a press release, possibly send it to Paul at the *Stranger*. There has to be a hook to get people to read a press release. We can add it to the newsletter. Shellie will contact Mike.
- Wendy Britton
 - During previous term, her board status and lifetime membership was removed for bad behavior. Shellie talks about reinstating Wendy's membership. Possible conditions: She'll never ask for permanent board position, won't run on the board for 5 years. In a private talk with Shellie, Wendy mentioned that she doesn't want to be on the board, that it doesn't fit her. She only wants run if there aren't enough candidates for a full board.
 - Deanna has concerns about this proposition. Is it better to have a board that's one person short, or have a full board with an explosive person?
 - Ranjan points out that we must be explicit about vacancies. Shellie: We should eventually change Bylaws of Constitution so you can remove board member with majority vote of board. Keep the proper management of the board.
 - Discussion followed about how to handle this situation. Should we put Wendy by name into the Bylaws? If there's going to be a vacancy on the board, the current board could approach her about running. Whatever we do, we want to be respectful of her contributions. We can leave it up to those present at the

elections. During the last elections meeting, the membership was not given the opportunity to discuss candidates while they were out of the room. We could make sure that these discussions continue to happen in future elections, like they're supposed to.

- Jerry was on the previous board and discusses what happened then and other years. The website was only the tip of the iceberg. Everyone on last board was exasperated. Wendy has censored paid members in the past. The problems with Wendy played a large part in the board turnover.
 - Discussion to create a position of honor as co-founding member, but this status means you can't be on the board. Idea to create a membership tier called founder, which would have 3 members, ineligible for board membership. This position can be rescinded by the board at any time with a simple majority. A person with this title would be acknowledged as contributing to SA in a unique fashion. We can work out the exact definition later. Shellie will present this proposition to Wendy. Talk about emeritus later.
- Motion to vote on creation of Founder Position. Rich seconds.
 - Board votes, passes unanimously.
 - Ranjan moves to make Wendy and Pat founding members. Rich seconds.
 - Board votes, passes unanimously.
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- Ranjan nominates Jerry as founding member. Rich seconds. Motion tabled for the time being, as Jerry is still an active member of the board.
 - Liz will work on language around founders and removing board members.
 - More discussion of committees. The chair of each committee is to send Shellie committee descriptions for the next newsletter. Ranjan says it should be a standard part of website, too. "How To Get Involved" – This could be one of the first things you see on website. Current problem: Right now it seems like the only way to get involved is to be on the board. Part of the purpose behind the committees is to prevent burnout in the board.
 - November Meeting: Rich will look into building. We probably do not enough time to secure a guest, so the emphasis will be the committee fair.
 - Ranjan ran the last one and explained to board how it worked: Each committee nominated a spokesperson to man the table and speak. Then there was an hour for people to mill around. They handed in index cards with their contact information. They're only allowed to join two committees.
 - What are the exciting projects for the next year? We need an interesting topic for the town hall part. Panel discussion about skepticism vs atheism (RB). Skeptical atheist, non-atheist who's skeptical. Ranjan and Rich will coordinate. They will contact Case, since this is very much his field. They will need to send Shellie the agenda a week before the meeting, at the latest.
 - Shellie and Liz will pick up refreshments.
 - Signage needs to be made for different committee tables. Mary volunteered to head this.
 - Deanna to create meetup.

- Gift Wrapping: Decision to sign up for whatever days we can get at the downtown Borders—the closer to Christmas, the better. We'll also try for Bellevue. Deanna to talk to Megan.
- Retreat: December 4, 2010. We will get to know each other and do business. Need a place with a lot of space. During the retreat we will talk about wants and goals for the organization and committees. Bigger picture stuff. Jerry nominates Ranjan to organize retreat. Seconded by Rich. Possible location: 2100 Building. Food: Chinese delivery. Time: shoot for 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Tree of Knowledge at State Capitol. Meeting, headed by Jerry and Case, on October 28 to plan and work on ornaments.
- Stationary. Jerry would like to have printed envelopes. Design? Redo logo? Amanda has looked into professional branding.
- Bus ads: We're way behind. Try to get 5 outside signs for a month. Amanda is working on the design. In the past we sent a fundraising letter in December. For the inside ads, we need to tell them which ones and dates.

Meeting end time: 5:40 p.m.