

Meeting Notes for the Seattle Atheists Meeting
Monday, December 11, 2006
Summary of action items follows meeting notes

Time and Date: Monday, December 11, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: Private residence of Andrew Sattler

Board members present at meeting:

Kyle Hepworth – President

Randy Rumley – Vice President

Jenny Lees – Secretary

Jerry Schiffelbein – Treasurer

Jeff Kidd – Member at Large

Shane Lees – Member at Large

Andrew Sattler – Member at Large

Others present:

Wendy Britton

Jami Kidd

Megan Spielbusch

10 people total were present.

The meeting was called to order by KH.

The last meeting minutes were approved, pending correction of misspelled names.

Treasurer's Report – JS reported that we have 63 members and have an account balance of \$2,358.08.

JS proposed a change to the member renewal letters to include wording about paying yearly dues/making donations through our new PayPal account.

Committee Reports

The Activities Committee has been planning a number of things. For the upcoming holidays, we once organized our gift-wrapping services at area bookstores to raise money for Children's Hospital. The Committee also has two speakers lined up for early 2007, including the author of *Fleeing Fundamentalism*, and a representative from a conservative atheist group. The national American Atheists convention is this spring over Easter weekend right here in Seattle. We are currently looking into ways that Seattle Atheists can be a part of this unique event.

At the first Membership Committee meeting, we discussed revamping the welcome packet for new members, considered next year's budget, and planned to create a member survey. These surveys will enable us to get feedback about how we can improve Seattle Atheists and continue to offer valuable services to members and the community.

The Outreach Committee discussed ways to increase our visibility in the community. One good way would be to spread the word about our gift-wrapping work to the media. We are also looking into affiliating with other national groups. Last year, our booth at the Fremont Fair provided an excellent outreach opportunity. We are planning to attend the Fair again in 2007, and are also exploring other festivals or parades we might participate in.

The Administration Committee started work on a budget for the new year and took care of some administrative tasks for the new board. We also resolved an issue with PayPal so that we can now accept memberships and donations online.

The Web Committee handles the technical aspects of the Seattle Atheists website. Because of problems with our past host, we switched hosting plans and now have a ton more space, @seattleatheists.org email addresses, and vastly superior customer service. To take advantage of our website's new home, we are in the process of redesigning the website with some great new features, and a more user-friendly interface for new people as well as members. A sneak peek of these ideas include a newlinks or blog feature, online membership signup, a better photo gallery, and a new, engaging library area.

Jami reported that Joshua Karpf donated 22 books to our library.

AS reported on the intergroup meeting, now called the Northwest Freethought Coalition. They plan to have quarterly meetings and events. Two Atheists United chapters have formed in the area, one on the eastside and one in Seattle. The Ethical Culture Society will be hosting a Darwin Day event. They will also plan a date to show the PBS series on evolution. The Secular Jewish Circle is planning to show a documentary on Freud. The intergroup will be putting together the 3rd annual 4th of July Freethinker's Picnic. Their next meeting will be in March 2007.

KH went through our 2005-2006 goals. The majority of our goals were met at least partially. After reading last year's goals, we established our 2006-2007 goals as follows:

Speaking Out

- Create a press kit for the media and establish the group as a media contact for atheists in the area
- Continue developing a list of free and cheap advertising
- Find venues for distribution of our literature

Connections

- Support those "coming out" or new to atheism; create a website page for "newbies"; designate "greeters" at events.
- Determine which national groups to affiliate with
- Write letters of support and recognize groups or people that we support for their efforts and accomplishments

Advocacy

- explore youth outreach opportunities
- identify and implement a youth outreach program
- support and find appropriate uses for the Legal Fund
- organize letter-writing campaigns

Activism

- Participate in three public activism-related activities
- Raise at least \$600 for the Speakers' Fund
- Host at least two speakers

Resources

- Establish a budget for the year
- Double the building fund
- Increase the membership to 90 members in 2007
- Sign up at least two lifetime members in 2007
- Grow the library by 50%
- Develop grant-writing capabilities
- Distribute and collect an interest survey to members
- Use the board Yahoo Groups calendar for official meetings and deadlines
- Develop new merchandise beyond our t-shirt, buttons, and magnets

New Business

Former Seattle Atheists Board Member at Large Gloria Hariharan asked if she could donate her own money in Seattle Atheist's name to a holiday fund that buys gifts for needy children. A vote was called and was approved unanimously.

Board Member at Large Craig Danz proposed through email that we have an Atheist New Year's Resolution page created for the website. It was tabled for further discussion and clarification closer to the end of 2007 when Craig could be present to explain his ideas.

AS has started a book club that is not officially affiliated with Seattle Atheists. He would like it to be an official Seattle Atheists group. A vote was called, with a friendly amendment to add a web page for the book club, and was approved unanimously. AS would like to have other members host book groups so more people can participate.

Member Laura Stebbins would like to start an atheist women's group and asked that she be an official Seattle Atheists group. The proposal was discussed. KH made a motion to vote on this proposal and it was not seconded.

Upcoming events:

- American Atheists is holding its national conference in Seattle April 6-8, 2007

- Carlene Cross is speaking to Seattle Atheists on January 25, 2007

A motion was made to hold a membership meeting in January. A friendly amendment was made to the motion to vote at the meeting whether to affiliate with American Atheists. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made to vote on the Seattle Atheists board recommending to the membership that we affiliate with the American Atheists. A friendly amendment was made to the motion that we send an email to the membership with a link to the American Atheists website and their affiliation guidelines. A second friendly amendment was made to the motion that absentee/proxy votes will be accepted through email to one of the four board officers. The vote was 5 to 1 in favor of the motion.

KH – yes
RR – yes
JL - yes
JS – yes
JK – no
SL – yes
AS – yes

The next board meeting will take place on February 5, 2007, 6:30 p.m. at Andrew Sattler's home.

The meeting was adjourned.

Summary of Action Items:

- Jenny will correct the misspelled names in the last meeting minutes and send to Jeff to be republished on the website
- Jenny will compile a list of this year's festival dates in Seattle
- Andrew will contact Gloria Hariharan and ask that the Cottage Lake Park be reserved all day rather than half a day for the 4th of July Freethinker's Picnic
- Wendy will send information on folders to the Membership Committee
- Andrew will create a "new to atheism" web page
- Wendy will look for pro bono lawyers
- Kyle will suggest to Laura Stebbins that she list women's only social events on the Yahoo social calendar and that she comes to the next Outreach Committee meeting to explain her ideas for the women's only group
- Jenny will send an email to the membership with links to the AA affiliation guidelines before the January membership meeting