

# **The Ethical Culture Society of Essex County**

## **Minutes of Board Meeting 1/12/2022**

### **Meeting Attendance**

#### **In Attendance**

Tom Cunningham, President; Alice Robinson-Gilman, Vice President; Terri Suess, Treasurer; Peggy Toy, Secretary; Elaine Durbach; Zia Durrani; Jeanine Rosh; Jill Farrer; Andy Weinberger; Lisa Novemsky; Esther Barcun; Barbara Lipton; Bill Stoever

The meeting was called to order by Tom Cunningham, President, at 11:06 am. A quorum was present.

### **Agenda**

- Review and approve minutes
- Review action items and update status
- Report on Living Ethical Culture in Our World committee meeting
- Upcoming platforms
- AEU update
- Capital Committee update

### **Minutes**

Minutes from the 12/8/21 board meeting were reviewed and approved.

### **Review action items**

Items were reviewed and status updated.

### **Living Ethical Culture in our World committee meeting report.**

Alice reported that the committee had come up with a tentative prototype to put a structure in place for monthly Sunday platforms. She pointed out that this structure is flexible and can be revisited and/or modified. A month's programs would include:

- On the first Sunday, a platform from another society, possibly followed by a breakout room for discussion.
- On the second Sunday, a colloquy or an Ethical member-led discussion on a book or Ethical Culture writer as a way of continuing education about Ethical Culture.
- On the third Sunday, a choice of our own platform from another society. Zia will provide recommendations for members.
- On the fourth Sunday, a speaker, possibly an outside ethical cultural leader or someone from our own group.

The two platforms that we will be hosting each month will focus on the themes of the environment and of ethical culture. In addition, Social Sundays will be scheduled on Zoom for members to get together for friendly conversation and to see how others are doing.

### **Upcoming Platforms**

At the current time all platforms are being held on Zoom. A link will be sent out prior to each platform.

Sunday January 16 2022 - Esther Barcun and Alice will lead a discussion on how we tackle the Goliaths in our world.

Sunday January 23 2022 - Tom Cunnungham will lead a members discussion on the topic of what we need in a leader.

Sunday January 30 2022 - An all-society platform will give a presentation on W.E.B. Du Bois.

Sunday February 6 2022 - Terri Suess will speak about bitcoin and cyber currency..

Sunday February 13 2022 - Alice will interview Meredith Sue Willis about her long participation with the Community Coalition on Race and how it has affected her thinking.

Sunday February 20 2022 - Psychologist and Maplewood resident, Dr. Mike Friedman, will speak on the topic 'Hardcore Humanism.'

Sunday February 27 2022 - ECSEC will hold a Social Sunday on Zoom.

### **End of Fiscal Year Report 9/1/20-8/31/21**

Jeanine presented the fiscal report for 2020 - 2021. We ended the year in the black, despite the building being closed with no in-person meetings for the entire year, the loss of rent and other repercussions of the pandemic.

### **AEU update on regional assemblies**

Tom reported that the goal for the Assembly this year is to provide a larger degree of interaction for the societies and to provide more opportunity for participating together. One possibility being proposed is to hold smaller regional assemblies where several societies who are in close proximity get together, giving members a chance to interact with people from other societies.

The AEU is looking for input from Essex in their decision making. Tom asked if any board member would be willing to represent Essex in those discussions. Members outside the board will also be asked if they would like to participate. Zia explained that the representative would attend meetings once a month for the next few months, at which time the shape the regional assemblies will take will be decided.

A brief conversation took place around how we promote who we are as a society in order to bring awareness and attract people to Ethical Culture. Jeanine noted that we have a weekly ad in the Worrall Publications paper which explains who we are, our philosophy and what we do. When we were having platforms at the ECSEC building, we advertised them in several different media online and sent out a monthly newsletter that went out to 200 people. She added if we have programs that are set and we have them ahead of time, we can begin to advertise in the different media again. Tom will be sending out an email to our members and friends to communicate what we are doing. Events can be put on the AEU calendar. Information for

events needs to be sent to Liz and she will get it out. Members discussed looking further into better ways to provide links to the public to attend our Zoom meetings.

### **Capital Committee update**

Terri reported that she contacted Vic De Luca to ask if he would brainstorm with us about raising money for repairs and improvements to the ECSEC building, noting that he is a former mayor of Maplewood, a fundraiser who works with foundations and has a wealth of knowledge that could be helpful to us. Before meeting with him, she would like to have a committee that sets out some of what we want to do. Board members as well as members outside the board will be invited to participate on the committee.

The meeting ended at 12:08pm.

Next Scheduled Board Meeting: Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at 11am

Minutes submitted by Peggy Toy