

The Ethical Culture Society of Essex County

Minutes of Board Meeting 9/9/20

Present: Tom Cunningham, Jeanine Rosh, Elaine Durbach, Zia Durrani, Jackie Herships, Alice Robinson-Gilman, Peggy Toy

The meeting was called to order at 11:18am and proceeded without a quorum present.

Minutes of the 8/12/20 Board Meeting were read and approved.

Committee reports

Finance

Jeanine reported that we just renewed a CD at an interest rate of .025%. It will be renewed for 1 year rather than 5 in anticipation of a possible higher interest rate at the time of the next renewal. We have 5 ladder CD's of \$9,000 each for a base of \$45,000 in our account.

Membership

Jeanine reported that we had a request for membership from a new resident of Maplewood. Jeanine has met her. Jill Farrer has called her. She is now on our email list and an application for membership will be sent to her when we have her address. Tom will also contact her by phone.

Platform

Elaine indicated that there will be two online meetings a month until such time that we resume meetings in the building. One meeting will be a platform and the second will be a colloquy.

Zia read Bart Worden's proposal for sharing platforms with other societies. He is requesting a representative from any societies interested in joining a committee being formed to explore the possibility of shared platforms. He is looking at holding the shared platforms on 5th Sundays, 4 for the year, commencing on November 29th. Zia asked Elaine if she would be interested in being the representative from our society. Elaine will look into it further and will be in communication with Bart Worden.

Sunday, 9/13 at 11am is the date and time of our first online platform and first meeting of the Fall 2020 season. Elaine will ask Liz to send out a reminder to members.

*See contact information for Liz below.

Pledge

Jeanine reported that Pledge letters are going out tomorrow and Friends letters will then be sent out.

Building

A church group which rents space in the ECS building spoke to Marshall about resuming their meetings in the building on Sunday, 9/13/20. Issues and concerns were raised by members around procedures that would have to be put in place in order to reopen and resume activities in the building. These included:

- Requiring masks
- Social distancing
- Taking of temperatures
- Availability of hand sanitizer
- Cleaning of the space, including restrooms, before and after meetings
- A signed liability waiver
- A single door used for entering and exiting
- Meetings limited to use of one room only plus restrooms
- Signing of a log with contact information

Tom recommended that the building not be opened until the Board has time to review and discuss the myriad issues around reopening, suggesting that since the building is currently closed to outside groups, the board should review all pertinent information from the state, insurance company, local authorities and members and make a formal statement of procedures and guidelines before reopening the building to outside groups.

Jeanine, who serves as liaison with our insurance company, will re-send to board members, via email, insurance information, including a liability waiver, as well as pertinent information from other Ethical societies and other items for consideration and discussion by the board.

A meeting for societies with buildings concerning the reopening of their spaces during the pandemic is scheduled by the AEU for September 17, 2020. Members will attend that meeting and our board will then hold a special meeting on September 18th at 9am to work on drafting guidelines, requirements and procedures for the reopening of our building. Tom asked Jeanine to work on a preliminary statement from which the board can then work and produce a final document. An announcement of the 9/18 meeting will be sent out.

Family Program

Tom and Evelyn have reached out to parents suggesting they do two activities a month. Continuing with the cooperative model, families will rotate to create activities that each family can participate in independently. They would then meet together online and share about the activity. Another plan is to meet at a specified location for an outdoor activity, such as cleaning up trash in a park. Tom said they would need to create specific guidelines and have a waiver signed for these outdoor activities.

Current Business

Alice shared about attending four sessions of a colloquy held by AEU. She mentioned that the term “colloquy” is used to denote a particular type of meeting that adheres to a strict order and is never done for the purposes of business or education. She suggested we might want to use a different name for some of the discussion groups we hold.

Alice and Sue Willis will continue their programs around Living Ethical Culture. As a carryover from last year, Alice announced that Bart Worden, Exec Dir of the AEU, is going to do a Zoom workshop for our society about Societies Functioning Without a Leader. September 26th was the date chosen for the workshop. An announcement will go out to members. Alice will reach

out to Bart and will get the exact time. Jim White will also be presenting a workshop and Westchester leader, Jone Johnson, will be coming again.

Esther Barcun is working on a tribute to the Cotlers scheduled for 10/4/20.

New Business

Members discussed possible ways our society could thank Birgit Matzerath for her concert series which has brought in over \$1200, of which she has donated half to ECS and half to a charity for the homeless. Tom will write a thank you on behalf of the Society. It was suggested that, in addition, we ask her what she would like that would help her move her work forward, possibly technical assistance.

Jeanine informed members that with the new board, we need to change the signatories on our checking account at Valley National Bank. Jeanine, Elaine and Terri Suess will be the signatories. Jeanine will get the required forms and a letter will be sent from the board to the bank.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:36pm.

Minutes submitted by Peggy Toy

*Current email address for contacting Liz: lizcunninghamherring@gmail.com