

The Ethical Culture Society of Essex County

Minutes of Board Meeting 11/11/20

Present: Tom Cunningham, Jeanine Rosh, Elaine Durbach, Lisa Novemsky, Zia Durrani, Jackie Herships, Jill Farrer, Bill Stoeve, Peggy Toy, Terri Suess

The meeting was called to order by Tom Cunningham, President, at 11:14am. A quorum was present.

Agenda Items

- Approval of Minutes
- 2019-2020 Budget Report
- Board Training with Bart Worden
- Programming
- AEU News and Announcements
- Update on Family Education Program
- COVID/Waiver of Liability
- Essex ECS Outreach

Minutes - approved

Programming

Upcoming Platforms

11/15 - Riverdale-Yonkers Ethical Culture Society (RYSEC) group is giving a platform on Defunding the Police

11/22 - Alice and Sue will be presenting their Living Ethical Culture program.

11/29 - Birgit will present the final concert in her Bach series at 3pm. Any donations will be given as a gift to the Society.

December - Date TBA - Bill Graves will present information from the Social Action Committee.

A What's Happening at Ethical notice to members will be reinstituted. Jeanine will ask Liz to resume sending out a weekly notice to members of upcoming events, speakers, platforms, AEU news, etc. Peggy will send a list of events and programs after Board Meetings and at other times programs are announced. If we have a list of activities for the month in advance, Liz can also publicize them in local newspapers.

Budget

Jeanine went over the 2019-2020 Budget report with the final fiscal expenses and income for the year, which ended on August 31. Although our income was lower than budgeted, with the building being closed after March due to COVID, our expenses were lower as well, so we ended the year in the black. As of October, our bank balance was \$37, 827.67 and Fidelity investments were \$62,377, for a total of \$99,000 in investments and cash. Our new treasurer, Terri Suess, worked on the budget process with Jeanine. Terri suggested we continue to foster pledges and

look at ideas for online fundraisers, such as a concert, play or reader's theatre. Jill suggested we expand the New Year's Eve party. Jeanine and Terri offered to help on that project.

Board Training with Bart Worden

Tom was in touch with Bart. There is a training being developed by AEU for ECS Board training and lay leadership but is not completed; however, Bart said he would be willing to do a training for our group. He would prefer we wait until after the 2020 election matters are settled. Tom requested doing the training in two sessions, possibly in December and January, each about 90 minutes long. Bart agreed that was a workable format. Tom will inform the Board as he gets more information from Bart.

AEU

- ☐ Zia spoke about the book discussions on systemic racism that were held by the AEU in October. The AEU may continue with them in January. Zia will send information to members.
- ☐ Zia mentioned that she has been attending some of the online platforms of other ECS groups. She also said that she contacted Bart Worden via email to let him know that some of the other societies were publishing descriptions of their platforms but not the zoom links needed to attend them.
- ☐ Zia was asked and agreed to lead a colloquy in December related to the book discussions and the topic of systemic racism.

Family Education Program

Tom reported that the Family Program is continuing to look for ways they can do activities together while adhering to social distancing and other COVID guidelines. One activity was doing a cleanup at a Maplewood park. They are also planning a food drive for a local food pantry.

Waiver of Liability during COVID

The Board passed a motion to have participants in the Ethical Education program and any Ethical Culture Society sponsored event sign a waiver of liability that Jeanine had obtained from the insurance company for use during the pandemic.

Outreach

Jackie talked about having projects, like the Bee Sign project, as a means of connecting with people in the community and possibly fundraising. Jackie will discuss the cost of the signs, etc. with Jeanine and the sale of the signs can be put in the weekly announcements.

Next meeting . . .

Members can share ideas for fundraising and outreach.

Update on plans for the New Year's Eve party

Meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

