

## **Minutes of the LifeRing Board of Directors Meeting: December 10 , 2017**

It was determined that a quorum of board members was present, and the meeting was called to order by Board Chair Dan Carrigan at 9am PDT. The other board members present were: Jason Groce, Lorraine Hull, Harold Marques, Rob Mullaly, Mary Beth O'Connor, Byron Kerr and Craig Whalley. Board Member George Gidora was not present. The Executive Director, Robert Stump, was also present. Also present were Kathleen Gargan and Dave Fletcher of LifeRing CO. There were no members of the Public present.

### **Conferences and Training: 2018 LifeRing Annual Conference:**

Kathleen Gargan and Dave Fletcher of LifeRing Colorado have been working with Lorraine Hull on preparations for LifeRing's Annual Conference. Purpose of having Dave and Kathleen join the meeting is to have initial discussion with brainstorming so once at Annual Meeting we can move forward.

Kathleen Gargan reports that a venue has been found: Tears MacFarland at a cost of \$800 per day, which with the usual non-profit discount of 15-20% would bring the cost to about \$680 per day. Keynote speaker will be Sarah Zemore who will be presenting full results of her LifeRing study: this will be the first big study to "put LifeRing on the map". The keynote speaker could be on Saturday, which would leave the remainder of Saturday and Sunday for workshops and/or breakout sessions.

Dave Fletcher: there are three areas to focus on with workshops and breakout sessions but how they are structured will depend on the facility and number of attendees. In terms of Growth and Business, consider a Venn diagram with three content area circles:

1. *Learning*: what kind of learning can we provide for conveners and people who want to be conveners in order to foster growth of the organization;
2. *Relationships*: building relationships with professionals in the addiction field; whether by convening meetings in their facilities or by attending professional conferences and setting up a table/booth. Both are vehicles for growth.
3. *Board*: what are our goals in terms of growth at the Board level and what kind of action plan do we need to meet those goals.

Kathleen: if focus of Annual Meeting is on growth there may be additional subcategories to explore such as education about marketing. Although not a lot of marketing has been done in the past, hoping that if LifeRing has some monies that some can be used for marketing. Has appealed to four different universities' Marketing Departments to see if they would be interested in having interns study LifeRing for a semester and put together a marketing plan; has received three responses already. Important to prioritize how to use monies for marketing, whether for tabling events or small ads placed in local papers or Counselor magazines, etc.

Robert remarks not to forget about LifeRing's website which is a major portal for LifeRing used around the world.

Currently, LifeRing's website states LifeRing will offer scholarships for people who would have difficulties attending otherwise due to financial constraints. Need to define how many scholarships will be offered and for how much as well as who will be eligible for the financial assistance. May want to reach out to LifeRingers who are especially active; also to try to bring in people from each region to enhance regional representation.

Venue holds approximately eighty people. May be useful to obtain advance count. The fact that the venue holds eighty people may be used as marketing tool, as in "Sign up now because seating will be limited". Quite a few people on FB are already signed up to attend and most are not from CO. Possibility of utilizing technology to reach wider audience also discussed.

### **Public Comments**

There were none.

### **Consent Agenda**

Mary Beth raised questions about expenses in Treasurer's report and requests that expenses be itemized rather than being listed as one lump sum. Most of expenses consist of the free books being sent out as well as the mailing of books and brochures. Discussion of year-to-date book sales in relationship to Marty's royalties: Marty receives \$4.50 per every Recovery by Choice and \$1.00 per every Empowering Your Sober Self book, regardless of how much LifeRing charges per book. Total year-to-date book sales are \$24,000 and \$3100 goes to Marty. Best to look at financials with a quarterly perspective rather than trying to analyze activity on a monthly basis since royalties are paid out every two months and Amazon payments come in every two months which can give skewed picture of financial activity.

The Consent Agenda was moved, seconded, and carried unanimously as submitted. It consisted of the November 2017 Minutes and was moved, seconded, and carried unanimously to accept the November Minutes as submitted. The Treasurer's report was moved, seconded and carried unanimously to accept the Treasurer's report as submitted.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Executive:**

Dan Carrigan: No new updates. Will discuss Executive Directorship later in meeting.

#### **Administration:**

George Gidora not present: No new updates.

#### **LifeRing 2018 :Annual Conference:**

See above discussion.

## **Old Business**

### **Fundraising**

Craig: Fundraising letter went out and approximately \$5000 has been raised; a couple more letters may go out before the end of the year. No budget yet but will be working on an “experimental” budget for 2018 going forward.

### **Public Persona**

Rob Mullaly: In process of pulling together the article for Journal of Addiction and Recovery based on Sarah Zemore’s LifeRing study.

### **Existing Meeting Maintenance**

Harold: No new updates. Re: recent discussion of how to handle complaints/problems in meetings. Will be working on creating a checklist for conveners to use when a problem arises prior to having to involve the Board. Seeking volunteers to help with project.

### **External Outreach/New Meetings**

Byron: Phoenix House Treatment facility in Brooklyn is closing due to financial difficulties so for now there will be no LifeRing meeting in Brooklyn, although there are other Phoenix Houses in the NY area which may be looked into for the future.

Byron met a Corrections Officer at CCAR meeting in FLA last year who was very interested in starting a LifeRing meeting at his correctional facility in western MA. Byron has put him in touch with another corrections officer in Winnipeg who has been enthusiastic about using LifeRing in the Winnipeg facilities; LifeRing has sold between 1200-1600 books to them over the years. Planning to contact Winnipeg to see how exactly they share the books with prisoners. Also, Acadia Healthcare, one of the largest treatment providers nationally, is interested in bringing LifeRing into its facilities; Azure Acres has already offered to host a weekly LifeRing meeting.

### **Professional Outreach**

Mary Beth: Sent out email to Convener’s list, Facebook CO and main Facebook page requesting information about potential recovery-related national and local events where LifeRing may want to establish a presence. Seeking specific information, including the cost and possibility of tabling and/or speaking at the event. Plans to eventually have a comprehensive list and will send out another email sometime in May to prepare for September’s National Recovery Month.

### **Professional Advisory Board**

Jason: No new updates.

## **New Business**

### **Pop-Up Committees**

#### **Executive Director Committee**

Dan, Robert, Craig, Byron: Role of Executive Director better defined as follows: Executive Director will serve as public spokesperson for LifeRing; serve the goals established by the Board; handle official LifeRing return communications; create plans for the future in direct collaboration with the Board; initiate the vision of the Board, including over one year, five year and ten year periods. Length of service per ByLaws is one year at which time may be re-appointed; there is no term limit.

Role of General Manager also discussed. Robert continues to work on the specifics that go into this role description. This is a paid position and not subject to ByLaws. This position is designed to handle all daily operations of LifeRing. Of note, the definitions are flexible and may change depending on the person filling the role.

Motion made to accept the definition of Executive Director, as discussed; motion seconded and carried unanimously.

Motion made to nominate Byron Kerr as Executive Director, seconded and carried unanimously. Byron will fill the role as ED until the new Board elected in 2018 decides on new Executive Director.

Motion made to create role of General Manager, seconded and carried unanimously.

#### **Budget Committee**

Craig: no new updates.

#### **LifeRing Oakland Office Move**

Robert: keys have been returned, cleaning deposit of \$500 has been received. LifeRing no longer has a brick and mortar presence.

#### **Book Fulfillment**

Craig: Have transitioned to print-on-demand with CreateSpace which was working adequately up until now has run into a demand problem so book fulfillment, which usually takes 1-2 days is now taking 1-2 weeks and creating a bottleneck. This is most likely due to the holiday season and will get back to normal. Right now, Craig has a ordered a bulk shipment of books so he can fill orders by hand. Some question of whether Amazon fills book orders using "Prime" two-day shipping.

### **LifeRing Trademark**

Motion made to let old LifeRing logo expire and to *not* renew the old LifeRing trademark; motion seconded and carried unanimously to let old logo and trademark expire.

### **New Business**

Byron: Mykel Hall, CA prisoner with whom Byron and Craig have been communicating for past two years has now been moved again, to probably the most remote prison in the country, in Susanville CA. He may be working in Fire Camp. Mykel has worked to establish LifeRing within each prison that he has been in over the past couple of years; had trouble at state facility where prisoners were able to get early release credit for attending AA/NA but not for LifeRing. Seeking help in filing an “amicus brief”. Byron has contacted the Appignani Humanist Legal Center who are eager to represent Mykel and are asking if LifeRing would consider filing the amicus brief. Marybeth would like to talk to Cooley; LifeRing should consider what its interests are in this endeavor: would it be a step towards getting access to drug courts/corrections in CA, for instance

Motion made to authorize Mary Beth O’Connor to reach out to Cooley and the Appignani Legal Center in effort to determine their level of interest. Motion seconded and carried unanimously.

### **Public Comments**

There were none.

### **Adjournment**

Motion was made to adjourn. It was seconded and carried unanimously.

*Submitted by Ewa Conroy  
LifeRing Deputy Board Secretary  
January 9, 2018*