

## **Minutes of the LifeRing Board of Directors Meeting: September 13, 2020**

### **Call to Order**

It was determined that a quorum of board members was present and the meeting was called to order by Board Co-Chair Lorraine Hull at 9:05am PDT. Board members present were: Lorraine Hull, Dan Carrigan (Co-Chair), Mary Beth O'Connor, Steve Gonzales, Jamie Itterman, Ewa Conroy, and Jocelyn Harnois. Board members Donal Breen and Scott Judkins were not present.

Non-board members in attendance included: Robert Stump, Executive Director; Lisa Swing-Corney, Frontier Region Coordinator; and Kara K., a convenor from San Diego.

### **Public Comment**

Dan invited Kara to speak about some initiatives she is helping to work on both in her local area and with the Board. She is a convenor from San Diego who also manages the San Diego Facebook group and organizes social activities for local members. Kara met with Dan, Jamie and Robert between board meetings to discuss a number of topics, including:

- Making online convenor training workshop-style/more interactive
- Engaging and attracting younger members to LifeRing
- Brainstorming new ways to encourage donations like videos at the beginning of meetings, starting a LifeRing resource newsletter, doing a LifeRing virtual 5K, etc.
- Revamping the website and using keywords creatively to optimize LifeRing's position in web browser and social media search results

Many of these topics are discussed in more detail under later agenda items.

Ewa noted that much of what Kara is thinking about would be a great fit for the Communications Committee and they agreed to connect post-meeting.

### **Consent agenda**

The August Consent Agenda package, including the Minutes and Profit and Loss Reports were moved (Dan), seconded (Ewa) and carried unanimously, with a noted adjustment to update the previous minutes to reflect that Lorraine was in attendance.

### **Committee Reports**

#### ***Executive Committee (Dan and Lorraine)***

Dan and Lorraine stated that aside from prep work for this meeting's agenda, there was nothing major the committee had to meet about between board meetings.

Mary Beth provided an update to the board regarding a legal issue with Pocket Rehab.

### **Finance Committee (Donal)**

No report today. Lorraine noted that we do need someone to serve on this committee with Donal and Mary Beth volunteered.

### **Marketing Committee (Lorraine)**

Updates will be talked about in later agenda items.

Lorraine mentioned she would love to partner with Kara regarding many of the ideas Kara shared during public comments.

Mary Beth's presentation for She Recovers is scheduled for Monday September 14, 2020 at 9am PDT. She is also doing a presentation for Santa Clara County in October.

### **Communications Committee (Ewa)**

Ewa has been posting every couple of weeks to the LifeRing blog. Kara offered to share her extensive list of recovery-related resources with Ewa, to help with blog posts or other communications initiatives.

Mary Beth suggested pulling things from HWYW, Empower Your Sober Self, Humanly Possible, etc. for blog posts as well.

### **Meetings Committee (Robert, Lisa, Jocelyn)**

Discussion of new video meeting guidelines is later in the agenda.

Mary Beth pointed out that some AA meetings are targeted to those 30 and under, and asked if this was something LifeRing should consider. Kara said she would reach out to the convenor's list to gauge interest. Lisa noted she has received requests in the past from the public wondering if we have youth meetings, so any guidance about how to respond to these requests would be appreciated.

Regional updates were also provided. Many U.S. meetings are still online, though the Frontier Region has moved to a combination of hybrid, online only, and in-person depending on the meeting. Robert said that several new specialty online meetings have started, including women's groups and workbook studies. Lorraine mentioned that Kaiser in Denver reached out to let her know that some face to face meetings had started up in their facilities again with social distancing rules in place. Jamie and Jocelyn shared that Canada is still a combination of in-person and online meetings depending on region.

### **Old Business**

1. *Discuss changing the description that comes up when hovering over LifeRing's website and Facebook pages.*

Steve compiled a list of most-used keywords, Lorraine asked him to send it to Kara since there is a member of her group willing to help with this work.

Lorraine suggested moving toward the “3S” words instead of “non-12 step” or “alternative to 12-step” language. So the hover button on website and FaceBook would use self-empower, secular, sobriety as key phrases.

Discussion was had that while “non 12 step” could be part of our background search terms, having it as our byline online sounds very negative. It was agreed that using “Empower your sober self” instead of non-12 step language would be more suitable. Robert or Lisa will make the necessary changes to the website to reflect the new language discussed.

Kara suggested selecting a phrase we can hashtag (#EmpowerYourSoberSelf) and she is going to start using the hashtag when posting to the San Diego site

2. *Approve final draft of LifeRing’s Online Video Meeting Guidelines – Lisa*

Lisa provided an update on the work the committee has done to create guidelines for convenors and participants specific to video meetings. Robert mentioned that the guidelines have been posted to LifeRing’s website and the board was ok with that. It was agreed that if we find anything is missing or needs editing, the guidelines are always up for revision, but for now they are finalized. Robert said he would send a notice to convenors that these are now available.

3. *Final results of summer fundraising campaign – Lorraine*

In the last 2 weeks of the summer campaign, we made \$900 more than was reported at the last meeting, bringing the total to about \$3900. Five people signed up to do monthly donations, which means an extra \$133 per month coming in until year end.

4. *Update on quarterly convenor training and determine dates - Jamie, Dan, Kara*

The board chose Saturday October 24, 10am PDT for the next convenor training, which will run for about 1-2 hours. Kara is going to continue working with Jamie and Dan on how to make the workshop interactive. The training will be recorded for those who can’t make it so they can view it later.

5. *Zoom Pro account cost with a watermark (“LifeRing” and a donation URL) – Robert*

Robert informed the board that through Tech Soup, we could get a Zoom Business Plan bundle at half the regular price for a 1 year subscription. Regular cost is approximately \$999.99 per year plus an admin fee to Tech Soup. This would amount about \$400 more per year than what we pay now. It would allow us to include a LifeRing watermark on all LifeRing Zoom hosted accounts and add a donation notice but not a donation link.

The board agreed there isn’t much point, since our main interest was to add a donation link and it sounds like it would have to be manually added to the chat box every meeting, anyway.

Kara suggested setting up a LifeRing themed background on the LifeRing Zoom account, similar to what Robert uses, to incorporate our branding into meetings. Steve is going to work on adding the background to our accounts and Kara is going to use it for San Diego meetings. For

meetings not hosted on LifeRing's Zoom account, Steve said it would be easy enough to distribute the graphics file to other meetings.

## **New Business**

1. *Introduce idea to have a brief video to ask for donations during online meetings – Kara, Robert*

Kara has been working with Robert and Dan on the idea of recording short videos (30 seconds or less) that convenors could play at the beginning of each meeting to request donations. Board members could each record a brief video segment, so it isn't the same video every time. This would help convenors who are uncomfortable directly asking for money. It could also help introduce LifeRing members to the board.

Kara also suggested we could design a screenshare asking for donations that the convenor could post that people can see as they enter the online meeting space. That way the regular meeting won't be interrupted by video. Dan and Kara agreed there is hashing out to do between board meetings. Topic will be discussed again next month.

2. *Financial adjustments may be required due to potential loss of revenue from in person meetings (meeting donation money by year attached) – Robert*

Robert shared meeting revenue by month for the year and for August it is way down. Lorraine said we need to do more fundraising to replace the income we've lost from passing the basket at face to face meetings. Topic will be discussed next month.

3. *Discuss altering some of our language to encourage inclusivity – Lisa, Lorraine*

Deferred to next meeting. Lisa provided a brief update that she was talking to John (a former board chair) regarding using appropriate language to be inclusive to trans, women, LGBTQ2S+ etc. Lisa knows someone with expertise in this area and helped a university work on their website; however, work on this will probably not take place for a few months as Lisa and this individual are both quite booked until the new year. To get ball rolling we can add something to the footer on the website, a one or two sentence statement about inclusivity.

## **Pop-Up Committees**

1. *Update virtual coffee for September Recovery Month Activities – Lorraine, Lisa, Dan, Ewa*

We will be hosting "Celebrating Connections with Coffee and LifeRing", an open online meeting space where people can ask questions and learn about LifeRing. There will be draws for free books as well. It will be held Saturday Sept 26 from 7-10am PDT. Kara volunteered to help out. It will be posted on calendar of events for Recovery Month (Voices of Recovery) and Robert can post it as a banner on website and share to the convenors list. Lorraine suggested offering a similar online session on the Sunday September 27 geared to existing LifeRing members.

## **Adjournment**

Motion was made to adjourn (Dan). Motion was seconded (Lorraine) and carried unanimously to adjourn. Next meeting Oct 11, 2020.

Submitted by Jocelyn Harnois  
LifeRing Board Secretary  
October 5, 2020