

LifeRing Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

13 November 2022

Call to Order & Identification of Public Attendees

The meeting was called to order at 9:02am. The board members in attendance were Sue Betts (Chair), Lorraine Hull, Lisa Swing-Corney, Michael Toal, Anna Bedolla, and Steve Gonzales (Treasurer).

Officers present: Joshua McLaughlin, Secretary

Senior Staff: Robert Stump, Operations Manager

Public: Mark Franklin

Approval of October 2022 P&L Report | October 2022 BOD Minutes

The chair recognized that BOD member Steve Gonzales (Treasurer) joined the meeting at this time.

Robert shared a transaction report encompassing January- October 2022.

Lisa moved a motion to approve, which was seconded by Lorraine. The vote to approve the October 2022 P&L Report was unanimously approved

The chair recognized BOD member Rafal Klopotoski as having joined the meeting at this time.

Sue raised October 2022 BOD Minutes for questions. As there were no questions, Lisa moved, which was seconded by Sue. The vote to adopt the October 2022 minutes was unanimously approved.

The chair recognized Kemper M. and Kat P. as having joined the meeting at this time.

Casey Resigns from the Board

Sue opened this topic, informing that Casey Cannizzaro has resigned due to concerns over his ability to contribute; she also informed the board that he is moving to another state. Sue wished him well and applauded his taking care of himself in this transitory time. She noted that this does leave the board a member short and put it to the board members present to bring forward any suitable candidates for interim board member.

The chair recognized Stephen, Richard S., Mark Fusell and Ivona as having joined the meeting at this time.

Update requested: BOD Contact List

Sue raised this item as non-mandatory, though useful for sending out Christmas cards and other communications from time to time.

Ongoing Business — Status Updates

Status of 2021 990-EZ Tax Returns

Registration Renewal Form (Signed 08/12/2022)

Extension 8868 (6-mth request for extension of time: 11/15/2022)

Sue raised this item and asked Steve to provide an update on whether the registration renewal form was accepted.

Steve asked Robert to confirm whether the extension form was refused. Robert responded that a letter from the IRS was received around a month ago, which stated the IRS did not accept the Income Tax return due to the extensions not being filed.

Steve asked Robert to clarify if it was the extension that was rejected. Robert confirmed the letter stated that the 990-EZ form was rejected.

Steve requested that the item be taken offline at this time so that he could seek further information on the filing status.

Robert expressed concerns over the possibility of LifeRing losing its non-profit status. Steve assured the Board that would not occur.

Anna suggested that, although critical and important, the item could be better dealt with offline.

Sue, cognizant of the deadline, requested that an update be provided within a week. Steve agreed to this timeframe.

Notification of Bylaws Changes to the IRS | Form 990

Sue opened this item by asking the board members present if they have any questions regarding the notification of bylaws changes. As there were no questions at this time, Sue asked Steve and Mary Beth if they had any updates from liaising with the board CPA and Legal Reps, respectively.

Mary Beth informed that she was advised that substantive changes need to be filed. She noted that we have not filed by-laws changes before. To clarify, she is reviewing the by-laws with the Legal Reps to determine what needs to be filed. She was also asked to provide the updated mission statement, which she will subsequently shared with the Legal Reps.

Steve informed the Board that he has not received an email but will be following up with the board CPA.

Sue informed the Board that this is a proactive effort to remain compliant in future filings.

Strategic Planning | Final Content Review

Sue opened this item, inviting Lisa to update the board.

Lisa gave an overview of the content of the strategic update plan. She noted that some content will be publicly posted, with details to be worked on internally. She noted that Robert is engaging content publishers to design a professional-quality post for the public, and that he is obtaining quotes at this time. A designer from within the LifeRing community could not be found as at this time.

In addition, Lisa shared that communications play a role in our reviews. She was happy to announce that LifeRing now has its gold seal from Candid, which will be appearing on the website. This will help donors in identifying LifeRing as being responsible with donations. Next month should see the dissemination of further information on detailed plans to meet the SWOT analysis goals. In closing, she opened the floor to questions and informed that the new mission statement and vision statement have been posted on the website.

Lorraine thanked everyone on the Strategic Planning Committee.

Sue asked that board members have a look at the report so that changes can be recommended and finalized before getting it out to a graphic designer. She also asked for the review and changes to be completed by Sunday of the following week.

New Business

BOD and Convenor Email Groups Terms of Use (TOU)

Sue enquired whether Mary Beth had spoken to the board Legal Reps on this item.

Mary Beth informed that she is able to liaise with them. However, she didn't remember being asked to do so. She shared that this was not necessarily a legal question, and the board should be able to deal with it in-house.

Sue asked Mary Beth if, in that context, the board should have upcoming policy revisions reviewed by the Legal Reps, or if this would only pertain to new policies.

Mary Beth shared that it would depend on the legal significance of the individual policy and subject matter.

Sue noted that as the conflict-of-interest policy is being worked on by the Legal Reps, she assumed all policies required review by them. If that is the case, she wondered if the board would be willing to approve the updated Terms of Use, as is.

Michael Toal moved a motion to approve the Terms of Use, which was seconded by Lorraine. The vote to approve was unanimously passed.

Conflict of Interest

Sue opened this item noting that the legal reps were still working on this policy. She asked Steve for an update on his query with the CPA. Steve shared that this was included in the initial email he was waiting on a response to. Sue asked if it was possible to have an update by the next meeting, to which Steve responded in the affirmative.

DEI BOD Awareness: Equity vs. Equality – Is There a Difference or Are They Pretty Much the Same

Sue opened this item and asked Lisa to share.

Lisa shared that this is a YouTube piece, which is four and a half minutes long. She noted it is an edifying video which is a great watch.

Sue thanked Lisa for her efforts in educating herself, and by extension, the board. She noted Lisa has attended meetings and webinars about DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion). She opened the floor to questions and comments.

Mary Beth informed the board that she recently did the training of Peer Support Specialists Students at the University of Illinois, about LifeRing. She shared that this is a great target audience as the students are aspiring Peer Support Professionals. She informed that the teacher who invited her was very excited. However, the teacher noted that of all our specialist groups, we do not have one for people of color.

Sue shared that we did have a meeting for people of color; however, it was short-lived due to the convenor having to bow out to meet obligations outside of LifeRing. She noted that efforts are being made to bridge this gap.

Lisa shared that she completed a free DEI analysis on LifeRing, which has been looked at by the Strategic Planning Committee. She hopes to revisit this in January.

Mary Beth informed that she was paid \$750.00 for presenting, which would be donated back to LifeRing. She noted there would be several opportunities like this in the future.

Sue thanked Mary Beth for donating the proceeds. She suggested that the funds be earmarked for DEI interest projects. She shared that Mary Beth is very active in representing LifeRing, which she thanked her for.

2022 Tax Deductions for Charitable Donations

Sue opened this item and asked Steve to confirm the tax deductions for charitable donations.

Steve shared that this depends on whether the individual itemizes or not. He was not aware of a limit if the donor itemizes. However, if the donor does not itemize, it would be included in the standard deduction.

Sue asked Steve to clarify what the numbers were. Steve apologized as he was not fully prepared to answer at the time. She requested that Steve gather the tax deduction information by the 29th of November, for the Fundraising, Marketing and Communications Committee.

High Level Review of Finances

Steve shared the P&L forecast, noting no significant change since last month. He noted that we continue to run a deficit, which is normal toward the end of the year. He noted that donations will have a significant effect on the overall position. However, he did confirm that the financial health of the organization is good. Efforts to reduce expenditure will also help in improving the overall financial position. He opened the floor for questions at this time.

Sue was happy to announce that due to recent donations, LifeRing is operating in the black as of November 10th.

Steve asked if these entries were in Quickbooks, which Sue clarified they are in DonorBox.

Robert shared that the money is not yet in hand and that it will be posted once he receives the cheques.

Mary Beth asked if Steve was aware of how much LifeRing brought in last year. Sue confirmed this could be found in the Committees and Workgroups Status Report.

Specifying her questions, Mary Beth asked what the financial position would be if we brought in the same amount at the end of the year as we did last year.

Steve answered that it is difficult to say until expenses have been taken into account.

Sue thanked Steve and affirmed that fundraising efforts will remain strong.

Committees and Workgroups Updates

FMC Projects and Outreach | This is Life with Lisa Ling

Sue opened this item and called on Lorraine to share.

Lorraine shared that Lisa Ling and her production crew visited Denver to shoot an episode on “This is Life with Lisa Ling”, which was on alcohol abuse. She shared that the episode would air on December 18th at 7:00pm Mountain Time/9:00pm Eastern Time. One part of the episode contains a portion of a LifeRing Meeting. She shared that Lisa spent time exploring the effects of alcohol in Denver. The title of the episode is “We Have a Drinking Problem”. Lisa Ling highlights the effects of Covid-19 on alcohol consumption. Lorraine shared that there will be watch parties held.

Mark Fussell asked if Lorraine was aware of the viewer timeframe. He was concerned about managing an influx of traffic, and mitigating cybersecurity risks.

Lorraine offered to pose the question to the Executive Producer and advised the board to expect extra traffic around the airdate.

Mark noted that outside of cybersecurity, it is imperative for online meetings to manage their participant loads effectively.

Lorraine advised that a communication would be sent out in the newsletter advising of the potential uptick in traffic. She suggested a convenor meeting could help to inform conveners of what to do in the event of increased participants.

Lisa shared that the episode was shot in a special LifeRing meeting and was not a case of “crashing” a meeting.

Anna gave a shout out to Lorraine for her work. She also asked how we could get word out that this is happening to the broader LifeRing community. She recalled the pop-up message in Zoom before joining a LifeRing meeting. She suggested this as a useful tool for Public Service Announcements, such as the season of giving or other special LifeRing events.

Sue thanked Anna and shared appreciation for the board members' engagement on the subject. She noted that the next newsletter would speak to the episode. She agreed with Anna's suggestion of using the pop-up message for PSAs. She proposed that for the week of airing, meetings have people capable of handling breakout rooms to manage participants. She noted that the feedback is most helpful for operational considerations.

Lorraine shared the Fundraising, Marketing and Communication Committee will meet every Thursday, as opposed to every other Thursday. She invited all interested parties to attend. Sue agreed and welcomed feedback for any of the committees. She opened the floor for questions and comments.

Rafal followed up on Mark's share, pointing out that he was not aware of a procedure for dealing with increased attendance numbers for LifeRing online meetings. Outside of capping attendance numbers for meetings, he was not sure what to do.

Sue shared that capping meeting attendance would not be the best course of action.

Mary Beth added that having conveners ready to take breakout rooms would be best. If interested people aren't able to get into a meeting, they may lose all interest. She noted that this didn't

constitute a long commitment to co-convene. Rather, a shorter term commitment to assist during the blip.

Sue recommended that the issue be discussed later and in the convenors meeting, noting that there were still several items to go through.

Robert informed that there would be a Convenors meeting on the 17th of November.

Sue asked if anyone had anything else to share before going into the public forum.

Steve shared a draft communication to the IRS and gave a brief explanation of tax filing requirements. He also confirmed that the LifeRing Tax Returns were filed electronically and that this might mean LifeRing does not receive a response from the IRS. He apologized for the late filing, informing that measures are in place to ensure a punctual filing for next year. He also pointed out that the board now has a CPA, which should make things easier.

Sue raised concerns over the lack of email responses from the CPA. Steve assured he would be following up with the CPA as soon as possible.

Lorraine recommended the discussions be taken into the executive session, to which Sue agreed.

Adjournment of Meeting

Sue called for a motion to adjourn the public session. Lorraine moved a motion, which was seconded by Sue. The meeting was adjourned at 10:09am.

Public Forum

The LifeRing visitors presented various topics.

Executive Session

The board conducted a closed Executive Session. Items discussed:

- [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) | Adoption unanimously approved by the BOD
- Substantial Donation | Project Earmarking
- Table Split at CCAR | MPRC Conference – Approved unanimously by the BOD