

Friendship Force Board Minutes

February 5, 2024

Meeting was called to order by Chris Vogel, President at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Gayle Best, Clarine Furey, Rosie Haas, Dave Kalan, Dorothy Kelley, Dorothy Krupa, Carrie Landers, Ann Line, Bob Mitchell, Nancy Rubly, Chris Vogel.

Absent: Jack Bridich, Barbara Geck, Cindy Hum, Ed Kelley, Kathy Luglio, Nancy Mitchell,

Rosie made a motion to accept the December 2023 Board meeting minutes. Dorothy Krupa seconded and the Board approved the minutes. Ann motioned to approve the 2023 annual meeting minutes. Rosie seconded the motion and the Board approved the minutes.

Treasurer's Report

Dorothy Krupa reviewed the attached financial reports and explained some changes in the manner in which finances will be reported going forward for 2024. The Restricted General Account is now reported at its fair market value of \$17,924 rather than at the initial investment amount. Prepaid member dues and newsletter hard copies will be reported as income in 2024. Dues collected this year will remain in prepaid. Dorothy discussed reasons for variances in the budget, which were not significant.

The \$27-\$35 cost of badges was discussed. These are now free to new members, and this year there were over 20 new members, so the expense was higher than normal. Bob commented that the price on the type of badge the club uses has risen recently because so few vendors are making them. No Board member objected to continuing to give new members free badges.

The club's financial position is very strong at the moment, with assets of almost \$35,000. The budgeted loss in revenue for 2023 was \$2,915, but the actual loss was only \$1,360. Dorothy asked if we want to make another \$1,000 donation to FFI, which would result in an actual loss of \$2360. No one was opposed to the donation.

The activities budget was briefly discussed. Only \$700 of the \$1,000 budgeted for activities in 2023 was spent. Some of this was used to subsidize member expenses; these subsidies could be continued in the future. Dorothy will add \$100 to the special events budget, bringing it to \$200.

Prior to the Board meeting, Dorothy distributed a procedure for using QuickBooks to invoice members for activities, as well as an explanation for members of how to use E Checks, which is most cost effective method for FFGM to accept payments. This explanation will be included in the next newsletter.

Rosie made a motion to accept the 2024 budget. Bob seconded the motion and the Board approved the budget.

Activities Report by Ann Line and Gayle Best

The next activity scheduled is snowshoeing on February 12, but it will most likely be canceled due to lack of snow.

Phobruary, a celebration of Vietnamese pho, is scheduled for February 21. This includes lunch at the Vientiane Noodle Shop at 3422 W. National Ave., Milwaukee, an optional visit to the Asian International Market across the street, and a possible visit to the National Bobblehead Museum as an additional highlight.

The Milwaukee Public Museum and lunch at Maders is scheduled for March 13.

A visit to the Oconomowoc Historical Society is scheduled for April 11. The committee is planning a tour of Road America in Elkhart Lake, with lunch in Plymouth, May 1.

Membership Dorothy Kelley reported the club has 101 members, with new members joining regularly. She suggested a new membership gathering in late April. Dorothy attributes some of the recent membership growth to the interesting activities Ann and Gayle develop — kudos to both.

There was a brief discussion of the Certificate of Status given to long-time, previously very active and involved members who do not renew their membership (usually due to advanced age and inability to participate in journeys) but want to keep abreast of the club's activities. People with this status continue to get the newsletter electronically and are invited to attend one annual picnic at no cost.

Field Representatives Meeting Bob Mitchell reported that although Jeremi Snook was not invited to Rosalynn Carter's funeral, the Carters' son Chip mentioned FFI at the funeral. The Field Representative Committee has been asked to come up with a theme for the North American Conference FFI in October. The theme needs to be decided before much of the planning can be done. Some individual clubs are remiss in updating their club profiles and/or identifying current contact member for journeys. FFI is developing Zoom meetings on eight topics related to club management and recommends that new members and some current members participate in these.

North American FFI Conference – October 7-9, 2024, Milwaukee. Dave Kalan reported that his committee presented eight activities to FFI conference planners, including the Milwaukee Art Museum, the Milwaukee Public Museum, a German heritage tour and a Riverwalk tour through Historic Milwaukee, City Tours MKE, a hike along the lakefront with Cindy Hum, afternoon tea at the Pfister and a talk by the Hunger Task Force as part of a community service project. Attendees will be given a list of suggested places to visit as well. The committee looked into banquet venues that could host 200-300 people, but due to the high cost of such venues,

decided instead to have a drinks reception, perhaps including entertainers performing at different stations or intervals. A key feature of the conference is providing opportunities for attendees to network. Mitch asked about checking with the hotel to see if the conference rate of \$160/night could be guaranteed to people who wanted to come early or stay a few days after the conference ended. The special conference rate might encourage attendees to stay in Milwaukee longer.

Journeys Chris made a request to FFI for outbound journeys to Costa Rica and Japan in 2025. She does not know if our club will be given another international journey because we got Australia and New Zealand for this year. Ann said there is a possibility of a journey to Java from June 1-14 with a possible extension to Bali. She will get more information for the newsletter. The Northern Illinois chapter had planned a journey to Peru in 2024, but the Peru chapter has asked them to move it to 2025. There is a chance our members can also go.

- The Shelby, North Carolina outbound April 15-22 has room for two or three more people.
- Four people have expressed interest in the 3-day mini-journey to Quad Cities and Cedar Rapids, Iowa in July.
- Dates are not yet set for the Baton Rouge, Louisiana inbound in August, which Cindy Hum offered to coordinate. It is tentatively scheduled August 12-19.
- Mary Hauser is coordinating a stop-over by a Taiwan club Aug. 22-24.
- Russ Hum was told the Santa Barbara club wants to come to Milwaukee in 2025.
- Chris is still waiting for specific dates and numbers for the Australia/New Zealand outbound. Clarine Furey will be involved in coordinating this journey.

2024 Board Meetings: April 1, June 3, August 5 (might be changed to avoid conflict with 5th at 5) September 30 (changed to avoid conflict with FFI conference), December 2.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Newsletter items due to Chris and Rosie by February 10.

Submitted by Carrie Landers