

Rotary Club of Swarthmore
Board Agenda
August 21, 2024
4:30 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Jane Billings, Joe Lesniak, Ken Wright, Carr Everbach, Rosemary Fox, Hillard Pouncy, George Whitfield, Lisa O'Mahony, Sarah Pita, Lori Markusfeld, Brian Casey

Excused: Elizabeth Church, Marc Berneski, Maria Zissimos

Opening Remarks: Jane announced that Sarah Pita agreed to be president-elect. Discussion of when to bring it to the club for official vote, as required by the by-laws, and whether it would be feasible to identify and then also present the next president at the same time. Announcement will likely occur at a future Club Assembly.

Secretary's Report: Minutes for July 17, 2024 were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Joe requested of the Board not to approve the August treasurer's report as the information is not up to date, request to approve July and August together

Committee Reports

Club Programs Hillard continues his run of lining up amazing speakers. September is booked except for one week, and he notes that Rosemary has been doing a great job promoting club speakers on social media and sending fantastic thank-you notes.

There was discussion of reinstating the practice of giving speaker gifts. Coffee mugs have been used in the past and are well-liked; President Jane noted that there is money in the budget and said she will proceed with renewing the practice.

Membership/Fun Fair - Carr reports that new member Vicky Shelter was inducted and plans to hold a fireside chat with prospective new member Benjamin Ridgway (note the spelling). Carr recently had a good conversation with a local business owner named John Kelly, who runs a masonry business in Springfield. He has applied to join our club. Club membership is sitting at 50 members.

George mentioned that in the past there was a process for member approval—prospective members were first presented to board, who voted on them. Subsequently the club would be told via email of any new application, and given 5 days to voice any objections. While the current practice of holding fireside chats is a sort of informal vetting process, the Board agreed to bring back the practice of approving new members, and inviting club members to approve.

Carr announced that he would be holding a meeting on 8/29 after club meeting to talk about ways to reimagine the Fun Fair so that it will be interesting to a wider range of people—like adults, for example.

Rotary Arts Conversation - Ken reported that they have 5 more RACs planned and talked about ways to keep improving the reach and appeal of the events. They will try working with local art groups, giving them posters to post to promote events. Additionally, the group is thinking about offering refreshments. Ken also reported that RAC is very solvent with \$1700 in individual donations.

Rotary Foundation – No report (Elizabeth was absent.)

Service Projects - Lisa reported that she has been in contact with Loaves and Fishes about expanding the club's volunteering with them. This would include monthly volunteering opportunities. This might include some morning and evening sessions, possibly on Tuesdays. She also spoke with them about showcasing opportunities for people to donate, as well as volunteer. These volunteering opportunities typically involve some manual labor that might be taxing for some; the time commitment may also be an obstacle for some.

Lisa is planning to have a service committee meeting on September 12 to talk about Interact, Ruth Bennett Community Garden in Chester, Heart and Soul; as well as international opportunities such as Project Cure, Rotoplast International, Cheetah Conservation Fund, and UN Climate Change Conference.

Youth/Interact –No report (Marc was absent.)

Public Image - Rosemary reports that all is well, and she is still busy learning.

Grants - Maria was absent.

Jane shared that a member approached her suggesting a new, more proactive approach to finding grant recipients that would involve identifying organizations in the community doing work aligned with Rotary and club goals, rather than waiting for applicants to come to us.

Old Business:

No updates on Mohammed Fakhry and his family (discussed at last week's meeting).

New Business:

There will be a Fun Fair Wrap-Up meeting August 29 after regular luncheon meeting.

There was discussion of developing a process for reviewing and evaluating requests to participate in Global Grants. This discussion originated with Hillard, who was approached at a Drinks with the DG event by a fellow Rotarian who wanted to speak to our club about his proposed Global Grant. Hillard declined, and they subsequently approached Jane. Perhaps the club needs a formal process of consideration for requests for Global Grant partnership?

George suggests either (1) form and ad hoc committee that will consider such requests or (2) such requests be discussed by the Board when they come up.

Regarding the earlier discussion about grants, Sarah suggests a more clear and transparent process around all grant requests—both club and Global.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:34 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Pita, Secretary