

Rotary Club of Swarthmore
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 18, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Jane Billings, George Whitfield, Hillard Pouncy, Carr Everbach, Brian Casey, Rosemary Fox, Marc Berneski, Lori Markusfeld, Joe Lesniak, Lisa O’Mahony, Elizabeth Church, Sarah Pita
Absent: Maria Zissimos, Ken Wright, Josh Twersky (all excused)

The meeting was called to order by Jane Billings, President.

Secretary’s Report: Minutes were approved with no changes.

Treasurer’s Report: Joe Lesniak presented the August treasurer’s report, with a balance of \$23,068. This report covers both July and August 2024 as the report presented in the August meeting was already outdated at the time the meeting took place.

It has been noted several times that there are separate items for Happy Dollars and Polio Eradication, which is confusing. The “Polio Eradication” item is a (kindly and well-meaning) zombie; it was created for some long-forgotten reason and is not in use now, but once categories have been created they cannot be removed.

Committee Reports

Club Programs – Hillard previewed a couple of upcoming speakers. He noted that Rosemary has been doing a great job promoting upcoming speakers via social media, and that he’d love to see that continue to grow. Jane also reminded the board that speaker suggestions should go directly to him.

Membership/Fun Fair – On Membership, Carr reported that Prof. Ben Ridgway was inducted, and that he’s still working on John Kelly. On the Fun Fair, there was discussion of engaging with the nonprofits who rent booths to learn of their experiences, and understand to what degree the Fun Fair actually benefits nonprofits.

Jane shared that she spoke with Frances Sheehan about making the Fun Fair a launch event for Delco Gives Day to improve the linkage for nonprofits; Frances is willing to discuss. Question of date alignment.

Rotary Arts Conversation - Jane Billings reported on Ken Wright’s behalf that Betsy Bolton would be presenting on September 20th, and that Sharon Friedler can’t make it in October.

Rotary Foundation - Elizabeth Church reports that there are several new Paul Harris fellows in the club. She also reported that she plans to start soliciting club members to give to the Rotary Foundation in November, rather than waiting until spring as has been customary and which is much closer to the deadline.

Service Projects - Lisa O’Mahony reports having had an enthusiastic meeting on Thursday with a number of club members eager to further specific projects. Frances Sheehan and Carr are interested in

continuing to engage local nonprofits through the Fun Fair. Kathryn Jones is eager to be point person for volunteer efforts with Project Cure; Joy Charleton continues to lead the Rotary Peace Fellow program for the club and is still working to help our Peace Fellow, Mohammed Fakhry, bring his family to the US. Lori brought up promoting litter-free school zones in conjunction with Heinz Wildlife Refuge. Anne Hansen is interested in the donation of gently used books. Sarah Pita is maintaining the relationship with Cheetah Conservation Fund and Dr. Laurie Marker with the hope of putting together a global grant. Jane is interested in whether there might be travel opportunities to Liberia with Shepherd's Heartbeat, which recently received a Global Grant with Swarthmore support. Loaves and Fishes volunteering is ongoing.

Youth/Interact - Marc Berneski reports that the Interact Club at the high school had just met on the day the board met, and that they were impressively organized and knowledgeable. Meetings will be every other week, and may move to monthly. They have decided to pursue Project Cure as an international project, and are pursuing a sports equipment project locally. It was noted Swarthmore Rotary intends to tread lightly and respect their sovereignty.

Public Image - Rosemary Fox is continuing to crush it on Instagram and Facebook. She reminds all club members to not only like posts. but also share them to increase reach.

Grants - Maria Zissimos was absent; no grants had been considered in the past month.

Old Business:

Process for reviewing and evaluating requests to participate in Global Grants and local grant requests. Not discussed due to time constraints.

New Business:

Saturday, October 26, 2024 – District Summit in Phoenixville (details to follow). District Governor's first ever summit. Swarthmore Rotary's Board should plan to attend. Note that District Governor Francy has not yet officially announced it so this is more of a "save the date" announcement.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:30

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Pita, Secretary

Next Meeting: October 16, 2024