

Friendship Force of Wisconsin - Madison, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes February 10, 2021
Via Zoom

Kathy Speck Kemeny called the meeting to order at 12:30.

Present: Kathy Speck Kemeny, Diana Rodum, Helen Rugowski, Donna Hussin, Mary Juckem, Peter Kaufman, Magdi Sebestyen, Gail Holmes, Mike Lambert, Doug Johnson, Sandi Wysock, Dorothy Baldwin, Agnes Rona, Stephanie Sorensen.

Excused Absence: Lise Skofronick

Minutes. The motion to accept the minutes from the January 13, 2021 meeting was seconded and passed.

Reports.

President's Report. Kathy commended how active our chapter has been, organizing so many activities.

At the January FFI Midwest Leaders meeting, a main subject of discussion was how to travel safely and what criteria should be used in vetting travelers, including and beyond issues related to Covid-19. This remains a topic for further discussion.

Kathy was pleased to report that her host from the trip to Oita, Japan, Kikumi Shiga, had proposed a reunion with the members who visited Oita in 2018. She, Japan journey co-leader Magdi Sebestyen and Kikumi are planning a ZOOM reunion for the early spring.

Treasurer's Report. Refer to Mary Juckem's Treasurer's Report which had been sent by email to the board.

- The board had no questions about the report. It was moved, seconded and approved by unanimous vote to accept it and post the January report.

Historian's Report. Refer to Donna Hussin's update report which had been sent by email to the board.

- Donna explained that after the Wisconsin State Historical Society accepted our materials dating from late 1970s thru 2018, they wanted materials turned over going forward in 5-year increments. WSHS identified the categories as Organization structure, Minutes, Treasurer Reports, Journeys and Newsletters. Any photos had to have name identification. The instructions provided in January 2019 were to provide the materials in print format. Recent communication confirms they have now agreed to accept digital format.
- 2019 and 2020 materials will be turned over in paper format. All 2021 thru 2023 will be in digital format with each category saved on its own flash drive in chronological order by year.
- Donna confirmed all necessary 2019 documents have been turned over to her. For 2020 documents she has the By Laws and newsletters. Sandy W will send the Open World Exchange report and photos from March 2020. The Secretary will provide paper copies of all 2020 Board Minutes and Committee Reports and the Annual Meeting Minutes following the Annual Meeting in April 2021. The Treasurer will do the same for the 2020 Treasurer Reports and Annual Report.

- For 2021 going forward, the information is to be sent as an attachment in an email, which she will then copy to its specific flash drive.
- Kathy thanked Donna and expressed appreciation to the other members, including Janet Lonergan and Mary Lindquist, who have made a considerable effort to consolidate, organize and transfer this information to the WI Historical Society.
- Donna left the meeting after her presentation.

Journey Coordinator. Refer to Stephanie Sorensen's Journey Report which had been sent by email to the board.

- Stephanie stated that there was nothing to report, and that it will be a few months before any decisions can be made about travelling.

Program Committee. Refer to Mike and Magdi's Program Report which had been sent by email to the board.

- They will continue to offer on-line events.
- They are beginning to collaborate with Global Connections to share online cultural events.
- Sandi suggested that Magdi and Mike could use Mail Chimp's survey function to assess member response to programs.

Activities. Refer to Gail's Activities Report which had been sent by email to the board.

- There were many successful activities since our last meeting, and several are scheduled:
 - Book club will meet on 2/22 to discuss The National Road.
 - A large group of ten volunteers went to Second Harvest in January, and they sent a thank you for our volunteering. More volunteers are needed.
 - Dining on the 6th will be on March 6 hosted by Maureen and Vivian with the theme "Wine and Cheese", taking a cue from the successful recent wine and chocolate event hosted by Lise, Gabor and Peter.

Outreach. Refer to Dorothy's Outreach Report which had been sent by email to the board.

- Dorothy expressed disappointment that the Madison International Festival taking place February 27 will only include a link to our website and nothing else.
- The 2022 International Festival should be normal in that we would be able to have a booth on site.

Membership. Refer to Lise's Membership Committee Report which had been sent by email to the board. Helen Ann Rugowski presented in Lise's absence.

- They project a membership count of 98.
- Meet Up was discussed as a means of finding new members but was deemed to be too expensive.

Ad Hoc Committees.

Electronics. Refer to Sandi's Electronics Committee Report which had been sent by email to the board.

- The committee met on February 1 and took ideas for enhancements from a California FF site, including a bottom strip with links to different information.
- Sandi is currently working on installing Google GSuite, which enables a share drive.

- Dan Eggerding and Allen Rieland are beginning work on the website this week.
- Some highlights of enhancements are adding high visibility photos to the scroll, making journeys and events visible on the home page, and including photos from trips with accompanying stories.
- Doug asked if “join us now” means apply to the club via this link, or if it could allow viewers to come to an event as a guest? Kathy referred that to a small group for consideration, and Sandi offered to present the question to our members using the survey app and will consult with some members about it.

Old Business:

Annual Financial Audit: Kathy

- Kathy got offers from numerous volunteers to help with the audit.
- Peter moved that Mike Di Iorio be included in the audit committee, Mike Lambert seconded it and it passed unanimously.

New Business:

Annual Meeting: Kathy

- Kathy proposed scheduling the annual meeting as a Zoom meeting later in April and asked for feedback about time of day and date.
- Sandi will use the Mail Chimp survey app to survey members’ preferences for time of day and date to meet, to find out who is working during the day, and if they have access to Zoom.

Newsletter. Agnes.

- Agnes requested that members send her copy to post in the newsletter by February 22.
- Agnes requested stories to publish.
- Sandi suggested a story about an Open World Russian visitor’s program for autistic children.
- Magdi will send information about two upcoming presentations, organized for March and April, about the history and culture of Wisconsin’s Hmong population.

Events Calendar. Peter

- No issues. Peter is keeping it up to date and requested that members check the postings for accuracy.

FFI. Kathy

- FFI is doing a brand refresh to be more relevant to a broader audience, seeking wording that translates well into other languages. The underlying goal is to more effectively communicate FFI’s mission and the ways that members can participate to further that mission.
- The FFI tag line will soon have a more easily translated and modern wording:

**“a world of friends is
a world of peace”**
- FFI is also updating the website, with the dual goals of more effectively reaching prospective members through the site and making website more relevant for completion of most changes expected in late April or May.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30.

Next meeting is March 10, 2021 12:30 – 2:00.