

Minutes of AGF Board Meeting | Tuesday, October 14, 2008

Pursuant to call and notice of the meeting, Carol Peck called the meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 11:50 p.m. on Tuesday, October 14th, at the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust at 2201 East Camelback Road, Phoenix, AZ 85016.

Directors present included Don Snider, Brian Spicker, Irene Jacobs, Roy Pringle, Judy Mohraz , Gerald Wissink, Carol Peck, Gene D'Adamo, and via phone: Kerry Blume and Barbara Poley. Marissa Theisen was also present. Carol Peck chaired the meeting and Marissa acted as secretary.

Initial Discussion

Carol invited board members to share how their organizations were responding to the economic recession and severe market fluctuations. It was clear that all were deeply concerned about current conditions and eager to learn more about how their colleagues were responding and what AGF could do to assist funders in developing greater clarity about meaningful options.

Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Roy Pringle and a second by Gene D'Adamo, the Board approved the minutes of the August 12th Board Meeting.

Review of Financial Statements

Roy Pringle reported that the AGF financial picture is looking good, especially relative to current economic conditions. Revenues have exceeded projections and expenses are slightly lower than projected. AGF is fortunate that most of its assets are in cash. The current value of funds invested at ACF are not reflected on the Balance Sheet, and are most certainly lower than the \$80,350 June balance. AGF has sufficient operating reserves to cover 9-10 months operating expenses.

Discussion Items

A. Board Development Committee

Jerry Wissink reported on the Proposed Board Slate for 2009. He shared that the Board Development Committee discussed a number of potential board members to replace Judy Mohraz, Charlie Thompson and Gene D'Adamo, who are all rotating off. The committee decided to maintain strong corporate representation on the board and so chose to invite Lydia Lee, JP Morgan Chase and Tom Ambrose, Phoenix Suns. The committee also decided it was important to bring on a person with strong financial skills, to replace Don Snider and Roy Pringle who will be rotating off at the end of 2009 and so invited Mary Jane Rynd from Piper Charitable Trust to join. All three candidates accepted.

Upon a motion by Irene Jacobs and a second by Judy Mohraz, the Board approved that Lydia Lee, Tom Ambrose and Mary Jane Rynd be placed on the ballot to be voted on by the membership at the Dec. 11th annual meeting.

Upon a motion by Roy Pringle and a second by Brian Spicker, the Board approved that the names of Steve Alley, Jerry Wissink, Ed Portnoy and Kerry Blume be placed on the ballot for re-election to the board for another two-year term.

Upon a motion by Kerry Blume and a second by Judy Mohraz, the Board approved the 2009 Board Officer's slate to include: Carol Peck, Chair, Gerald Wissink, Vice-Chair, Roy Pringle, Secretary/Treasurer.

Jerry Wissink reported that the Board Development committee had decided to schedule another meeting to discuss the consultant's recommendations, at a time when Carol Peck could attend. The date of this meeting is now set for December 1st at 2:30 p.m. at AGF. All board members are welcome to attend. Jerry also invited retiring board members Judy Mohraz, Charlie Thompson and Gene D'Adamo to serve on this committee, citing that their experience and wisdom would be helpful to the organization as it reflects on its mission/vision in the years to come.

B. Other discussion items

- Marissa shared that AGF had been approached by the ASU Lodestar Center to help market a three-day Advanced Proposal Analysis program they will be hosting on March 25-27 in Phoenix. The program is a product of The Grantmaking School at Grand Valley State. ASU plans to market the program nationally and Marissa offered to help by providing ASU staff mailing lists and marketing the event in our enewsletters. She did share with the ASU staff that given the time-commitment and program costs, she doubted that many of the attendees would be from Arizona foundations. After a brief discussion, the board agreed that it was appropriate for AGF to assist with marketing efforts, so long as no significant costs were involved.
- Marissa also mentioned that the Conference of SW Foundations will be holding their 2009 Annual Conference on September 24-26 in Scottsdale. Both she and Don Snider are on the conference planning committee. The board agreed that AGF would not invest any monetary resources but should provide assistance in marketing this event and helping identify AGF members who might be willing to host a reception or other conference event.
- Marissa mentioned that the research for the 2008 Arizona Giving Study is almost complete and she will be distributing a draft copy of the report to board members soon so they can check to be sure the asset and grants information listed for their organizations is correct.

C. AGF Member Survey on Impacts of Recession on Grantmaking

Marissa shared that many other Regional Associations were beginning to discuss how the current economic recession/market turmoil was impacting their members and their communities. Several had issued a member survey to identify potential changes in member operations and grantmaking. Marissa asked for board input on the idea of surveying AGF members and provided a sample of the types of questions being asked by other RA's. After some lengthy discussion, the board agreed that there would be value in developing a brief member survey that could provide timely and relevant information to AGF members and the general public. Gene D'Adamo agreed to work with Marissa to develop a list of a few survey questions which will be distributed to AGF members within the next month.

The board also agreed that there would be great value in AGF organizing one or more facilitated discussion forums involving funders, government representatives and key nonprofit leaders to allow for more in-depth discussion of 1) what steps funders are taking to reduce their own operating expenses and to alter their funding priorities; 2) what state and local funding cuts have already been made and what others are planned and how nonprofits are responding; 3) what funders can do to mitigate the worst of these funding cuts; 4) what can be done to increase individual charitable contributions during these very difficult times.

The board suggested the first forum should be scheduled sometime after the elections but prior to the holidays. Marissa asked for volunteers to assist in planning these forums and Irene Jacobs, Brian Spicker, Judy Mohraz and Gene D'Adamo offered to serve. Judy Mohraz also recommended that Lois Savage be invited to serve on this committee.

Information Items

A. Presidents Report

Marissa first congratulated Gene D'Adamo for being honored by the American Jewish Committee Arizona Chapter with their 2008 National Human Relations Award. She then reported that Erin Dow, the new Manager of Member Programs/Services was now on staff, although she was not in the office today. Marissa shared briefly about a planned Oct. 31st program on Native American Philanthropy and briefly mentioned a successful Education Funders Affinity Group meeting held on September 15th and a Small Foundations Roundtable held on Oct. 7th. She has scheduled the next Corporate Funders Affinity Group meeting for Nov. 5th on The Green Effect: How Corporate Community Involvement is Embracing Environmentalism. Thus far only a few members have registered for this program.

B. Special Events

Marissa reported that over 190 folks have registered thus far for the Oct. 22nd Art of Giving Luncheon, which is about the size of last year's registration. She is hoping for a few more and urged board members who hadn't purchased tickets to do so.

Gene D'Adamo reported that to date, because of heavy news coverage of the political campaigns and the economic freefall, no ads for the event had been placed. However he is hoping the staff will at least do a few stories about the event in select neighborhood papers. He pointed out that the event was mentioned in the September AZ Society magazine and the book Smart Generosity was featured in their 2008-2009 Community Connections publication released this week. He mentioned that AGF staff had done a good job of securing event underwriting, exceeding last year's funding in what is a challenging fundraising environment. Thus he expects the event to generate more net revenues than last year.

C. Program

Don Snider reviewed the remaining programs scheduled for 2008 and highlighted the three programs scheduled for 2009 as well as the long list of other program ideas. He mentioned that the next Program Committee meeting is scheduled for December 11th at 2 p.m., immediately following the AGF Annual Meeting. Board members are welcome to attend this meeting. If they have additional program topics for 2009, he encouraged them to contact Marissa.

Carol Peck adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.