

Minutes of AGF Board Meeting | Tuesday, August 11, 2009

Pursuant to call and notice of the meeting, Carol Peck called the meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 12:00 pm on Tuesday, August 11, at the Rodel Charitable Foundation of Arizona, 6720 N. Scottsdale Road, Suite 380, Scottsdale, AZ.

Directors present included Jerry Wissink, Deborah Whitehurst, Roy Pringle, Don Snider, Ed Portnoy, Lydia Lee, Merl Waschler, Carol Peck, and, via video conference, Barbara Poley and Kerry Blume. Robert Ashcraft was present as a guest for a portion of the meeting. Marissa Theisen and Erin Dow were also present. Carol chaired the meeting and Erin acted as secretary.

ASU Lodestar Center Relationship with AGF

Robert Ashcraft spoke to the board about the focus of the ASU Lodestar Center with respect to philanthropy. He expressed that, to date, the Center has focused its research on individual giving and volunteering in Arizona, but the Center is open to partnering with AGF and others to expand knowledge relating to all forms of philanthropy. Robert shared that the Center is also committed to providing a range of educational opportunities for ASU students as well as programs for the broader nonprofit community, including the two annual conferences which are open to members of the philanthropic community. The Lodestar Center also occasionally helps bring national resources like the Johnson Center Grantmaking School to Arizona. Following Robert's opening remarks, board members asked a number of questions relating to the Center's relationship to the Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits, research regarding Native American philanthropy, etc.

Once Robert left, the board had a discussion on how AGF could most effectively partner with the Lodestar Center. The board agreed that the Lodestar Center represents a valuable community resource and that AGF should maintain a strong working relationship with the Center. If the Center meets AGF membership qualifications, AGF should encourage them to join. This step would enable representatives of the Center to participate in AGF programs and serve on relevant committees, thus strengthening the working relationship.

Resignation of Tom Ambrose from Board

The board discussed the change in Tom Ambrose's position at the Phoenix Suns and agreed to table a discussion of his possible resignation until he can provide more information on his new job assignment.

Approval of Minutes

Carol Peck pointed out that the minutes provided in the board packets had a few technical errors so staff had provided members revised minutes to approve.

Upon a motion by Lydia Lee and a second by Roy Pringle, the board approved the revised minutes of the June 9th board meeting.

Review of AGF Financial Statements

Roy Pringle reviewed the current financial statements. First, he noted that the Balance Sheet illustrates that AGF has a large cash balance and recommended that AGF consider defining a purpose for some of these funds. He felt that having a full year's budget in cash reserves was excessive and that AGF could designate a part of that money for a specific use or invest some in higher yield instruments. Jerry Wissink suggested earmarking some of the funds for specific future

AGF programs. Marissa Theisen suggested that the Finance Committee review the situation and discuss options for handling the reserves and present their ideas to the board. Merl also recommended the committee consider setting minimum and maximum levels for operating reserves to avoid excessive reserves in the future. Roy agreed to schedule a meeting of the Finance Committee and report back to the board at the October 13 meeting. Roy also noted the Financial Statement shows that AGF revenues and expenses are consistent with projections. He noted that the Retirement line item reflects the payments Marissa has been making to AGF since June to compensate for the payroll error discussed at the June 9 board meeting. Jerry asked that Marissa incorporate the approved policy for handling payroll into the formal AGF policies and distribute it to board members at the next board meeting.

Carol Peck asked what interest rate AGF was making on its large reserves and Marissa stated that both Wells Fargo and the Sunrise Bank were paying 1% on the savings accounts. Carol suggested AGF consider putting part of the fund balance in an account or institution with a higher rate of return. Lydia Lee offered to check with Chase to see if they could offer a better rate.

Discussion/Action Items

AGF Programs Featuring a Single Nonprofit

Don Snider expressed that it has been an unwritten policy that AGF does not provide programs that highlight one particular fund-seeking organization. Rather, AGF programs generally highlight an issue that may involve a number of related fund-seeking organizations. The board agreed that AGF programs should not highlight one particular nonprofit. They also agreed that AGF sponsored programs should be vetted by the Program Committee through its normal development process, although there should be some flexibility to consider timely program ideas that surface between committee meetings. After some discussion, the board agreed that AGF staff should invite members to submit ideas for programs by a deadline date before each program committee meeting. The committee will consider all ideas and choose those they feel best reflect the interest of the membership. Any program ideas submitted after the stated deadline would not be considered at the next Program committee meeting.

Member Satisfaction Surveys

Jerry Wissink gave a brief overview of questions the Membership Committee had raised relating to the AGF Member Satisfaction Survey. He asked for board feedback on whether or not to survey members this year and if so how best to ensure relevant and representative results. He presented several options for how the survey could be distributed, including an online survey similar to those of years past, phone interviews by board members and AGF staff, or a combination of both. After a brief discussion, the board recommended that the Committee proceed to develop an online survey targeted at all members. In addition, AGF board members will survey new members (those who have joined in the past two years) via phone, asking a few open ended questions to gather more detailed information. Jerry also asked the board if they thought incentives for surveys would be a good way to increase survey participation. Board members agreed incentives might be helpful and recommended that AGF allocate \$250 to provide ten (10) \$25 gift certificates to be awarded in a random drawing from all those who complete the survey by a stated deadline date. AGF staff will offer winners their choice of gift cards.

Information Items

President/CEO's Report

Marissa Theisen briefly reviewed her CEO report. She highlighted the Philanthropy at Work ads that have been running all summer in The Arizona Republic thanks to the assistance of Gene D'Adamo. Marissa noted that staff had posted them on the AGF website. She highlighted the upcoming Education Funders Affinity Group meeting and the Small/Family Foundation Roundtable meeting. Marissa stated that the new VISTA volunteer, Heather Smith, will be joining the AGF staff at the end of August. Her job will be to help with marketing of AGF's resources and expanding membership. She also noted that Heather will be helping Erin Dow with creating a social media plan which will include a new user community, similar to Facebook, for AGF members. Marissa provided an update on the Ombudsman position discussed at the last board meeting, noting that the proposal prepared by the Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits was in the board packets. The Alliance has secured funding from several organizations, and if Piper approves funding, the Alliance plans to contract with Lisa Glow to begin work shortly.

Committee Reports

Membership Committee

Jerry Wissink noted that the Membership Committee and some board members were actively pursuing member prospects, and he encouraged board members to bring potential members to programs.

Program Committee

Don Snider reported that the Program Committee has determined the schedule for the rest of the year. Marissa Theisen noted that she was working with Steve Alley to finalize a program in Tucson for November. Jerry Wissink suggested AGF consider locating the program in Casa Grande to draw from both Tucson and Phoenix. Marissa agreed to discuss this possibility with Steve Alley.

Special Events Committee

Kerry Blume reported that AGF has exceeded its sponsorship goal for the event by \$9,000 and has secured a strong list of Partners. AGF staff members are working with a marketing consultant and have developed a detailed event marketing plan. AGF will mail invitations in the second week of September.

Board Development Committee

Ed Portnoy reported that the Board Development Committee will be meeting sometime in September to discuss candidates to fill the positions left vacant by board members who are rotating off the board at the end of the year. Current Committee members include Kerry Blume, Carol Peck, Roy Pringle, Judy Mohraz and Charlie Thompson. He invited any other board members interested in serving on this committee to notify Marissa so she can invite them to the first committee meeting.