MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
INTERNATIONAL LUTHERAN LAYMEN’S LEAGUE

Online

Friday, July 24, 2020

In attendance: Kurt Senske, Chairman; Douglas Werth, Vice Chairman; Gretchen Jameson, Secretary; Jack Ficken, Treasurer; Jim Dankenbring; Phillip Johnson; Jonathan Laabs; Virginia Miller; Mick Onnen; Gene Partlow; Robert Rauscher; Patricia Ross; Edith Schoepp; Karen Soeken; Pastoral Advisor Rev. Bill Tucker, Ex Officio; LHM CEO Kurt Buchholz, Ex Officio; LCMS Synodical Liaison Daniel McMiller, Advisory; LLL-Canada Managing Director Lisa Jackson, Advisory

Not in attendance: LCC Synodical Liaison James Schnarr, Advisory

Additional staff attended at the request of CEO Buchholz.

01 Phillip Johnson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

02 Bill Tucker, Pastoral Advisor, led a devotion on Numbers 11, reminding the Board that even in times of challenge and struggle, we can greet the Lord’s provisions with gratitude.

03 Pastoral Advisor Tucker installed new Board members Jim Dankenbring, Patricia Ross, and Virginia Miller.

04 Chairman Johnson welcomed the Board to the meeting, highlighting the significant number of items to be addressed and the meeting’s online format.

05 Chairman Johnson handed leadership of the meeting to Gene Partlow, Vice Chairman, to lead the process to appoint the Chairman for 2020-2021. Nominees were Phillip Johnson, Robert Rauscher, and Douglas Werth. The floor was opened for additional nominations, and Kurt Senske was nominated. Rauscher and Werth withdrew their nominations.

M 2020/21-01 By majority vote, Kurt Senske was appointed as Chairman of the Board.

06 Chairman Senske led the process to appoint the Vice Chairman. Advance nominations were received for Gene Partlow, Robert Rauscher, and Kurt Senske. Chairman Senske’s name was removed from consideration. The floor was opened for additional nominations, and Douglas Werth was nominated.

M 2020/21-02 By majority vote, Douglas Werth was appointed as Vice Chairman of the Board.
Chairman Senske led the process to appoint the Secretary. Advance nominations were received for Gretchen Jameson, Mick Onnen, Gene Partlow, Edith Schoepp, and Kurt Senske. Chairman Senske’s name was removed from consideration. The floor was opened for additional nominations. No additional nominations were offered.

M 2020/21-03 By majority vote, Gretchen Jameson was appointed as Secretary of the Board.

Chairman Senske led the process to appoint the Treasurer. Advance nominations were received for Jack Ficken, Kurt Senske, and Douglas Werth. Chairman Senske’s and Vice Chairman Werth’s names were removed from consideration. The floor was opened for additional nominations. No additional nominations were offered.

M 2020/21-04 By acclamation, Jack Ficken was appointed as Treasurer of the Board.

Chairman Senske led the process to appoint the Board Representative to the LHM Foundation Board of Trustees. Advance nominations were received for Gene Partlow, Robert Rauscher, and Douglas Werth. The floor was opened for additional nominations. No additional nominations were offered.

M 2020/21-05 By majority vote, Gene Partlow was appointed as Board Representative to the LHM Foundation Board of Trustees.

M 2020/21-06 Motion was made to approve the consent agenda, including: Approval of Meeting Agenda; Approval of April 2020 Meeting Minutes; and Approval of July 2020 Seibert Foundation Resolution.

Motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Chairman Senske thanked Johnson for the prepared committee appointment recommendations in the meeting docket. He will review and update the recommendations based on the officer appointment results.

Treasurer Ficken, Chair of the Budget & Finance Committee, reported that the Committee met with staff to review finances in light of the impact of COVID-19. He introduced David Lanius, CFO, to present the financial report.

CFO Lanius provided an overview of finances through the end of fiscal year 2020 including LHM’s PPP loan and investment changes. He also provided an update on the results of the LHM Foundation’s investments. The Board discussed and asked questions through the report.

M 2020/21-07 Motion was made to go into Executive Session.

Motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.
M 2020/21-08 Motion was made to go out of Executive Session.

Motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

12 Kurt Buchholz, CEO, introduced Tony Cook, Vice President of Global Ministries; Jay, DeBeir, Executive Vice President and COO; and Jeff Craig-Meyer, Vice President of Constituent Services to give updates on how COVID-19 has impacted their areas, how they have adapted, and how they are looking to the future in those decisions.

- Vice President of Global Ministries Cook provided an overview of how ministry activity has adapted, noting that steps that had previously been taken to transfer to more online ministry prepared the team well for pivoting. Ministry activity domestically and internationally has changed similarly, with an increase in digital and media work around the world. Travel is largely restricted. Ministry activity has been connecting to people in their current needs and generally been done very cost effectively using online methods. Staff productivity has not been hindered domestically during the remote work time and will continue at least through the end of the calendar year.

- Executive Vice President & COO DeBeir provided an update on domestic staff's move to remote work, which happened quickly. Since then, staff has checked with frequently to determine that work needs are being met and accounted for.

- Vice President of Constituencies Craig-Meyer reported on philanthropic and engagement changes since March. Regular donors have largely remained loyal, and more asks have been incorporated into existing programming to encourage support. As in other areas of the organization, the investments and changes they made to their tactics over the past several years prepared that team well for remote work. Major gifts have suffered as a result of COVID-19 but were on track until travel was halted. SENT regional leadership team concluding meetings took place primarily virtually. One-on-one conversations regarding CONNECT leadership are starting again.

- CEO Buchholz referenced the draft of the 2020 strategic plan included in the docket and reported that a new revised and reformatted plan will be ready to present to the Board when the FY 2022 budget is presented in April.

- CEO Buchholz reported on the organizational key performance indicators for fiscal year 2020 and on organizational efforts to refine and expand the data reporting.

- The Board discussed and asked questions throughout reports.

- Lisa Jackson, Managing Director of LLL-Canada reported that online giving has been up over the past several months, and online work seems to be well-received. Partnerships with congregations remain strong, including the mutual sharing of resources. Partnership with the church in Nicaragua, including work with LHM-Nicaragua, continues as well.
CEO Buchholz thanked Jackson for her continued partnership and LLL-Canada’s support of LHM-Nicaragua.

13 CEO Buchholz reported on the proposed Board monitoring trip to Central American in 2021. The Board needs to identify who will attend by the October Board meeting so that training and logistics can be coordinated. The Board will plan as though all travel will be normal but operate with great flexibility to pivot as needed due to COVID-19 or other world situations.

Chairman Senske requested that those Board members who have not participated in a trip in the past and are interested in participating contact him after the meeting to state their interest.

14 Dan McMiller, LCMS Liaison, reported that thankfully illness among LCMS missionaries has been very minimal and only a few missionary families have been required to return home due to safety concerns. As is the case for many organizations, funding remains a concern and the upcoming proposed budget is very conservative as a result, but there is confidence that the church will respond in a supportive way. Missionaries continue to be recruited. Aside from COVID-19 concerns, other international concerns continue to be managed and coordinated as usual. Travel remains highly restricted. He remains grateful for the relationship and collaboration with LHM.

15 Chairman Senske reported that James Schnarr, LCC Liaison, was unable to attend the meeting.

16 Committee Reports

- Executive Committee: Johnson reported that the Committee met in June. Minutes from the meeting were included in the meeting docket.

- Audit Committee: Mick Onnen reported that the audit has been in process, conducted largely via online meetings and document exchanges. Additional work will happen in August. New auditors have been assigned to continue ensuring appropriate checks and balances are in place. The audit should be finished in September, and the Committee will meet that month to review.

- Board Development Committee: Partlow reported that the 2019-2020 Committee had recommended two items for consideration and discussion, which would include proposed revisions to the Bylaws.

- Election Committee: Jonathan Laabs reported that the Committee met on May 26 and reviewed and approved the election results.

- Compensation and Evaluation Committee: Secretary Jameson reported that there was no substantial update but that the Committee has supported recent development opportunities for CEO Buchholz.
• Fund Development Committee: Johnson reported that there was no update to give but that the Board had previously noted this as a committee that may need to be reviewed, as the overall fundraising purpose seems to be more of a staff function.

• Nominations Committee: Karen Soeken reported that the Committee updated the Board skills and experience matrix, noting the gaps indicated through that process. Treasurer Ficken, Secretary Jameson, and Johnson will all term out of office. Nominations for next year are due November 1.

Chairman Senske encouraged the Board to send potential nominees to new Committee Chair Bob Rauscher and noted considering the possible formation of a subcommittee to consider future nominee recommendations.

M 2020/21-09 Motion was made to approve the Resolution to Elect Sub-Corporation Directors as presented.

Motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

17 CEO Buchholz presented the future meeting schedule.

M 2020/21-10 Motion was made to approve the future meeting schedule as presented.

Motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

18 Future meeting schedule:
  • October 16-17, 2020 – St. Louis, MO
  • January 15, 2021 – Online
  • April 23, 2021 – St. Louis, MO
  • July 22-23, 2021 – St. Louis, MO
  • October 22, 2021 – St. Louis, MO
  • January 14, 2022 – Online
  • April 22, 2022 – St. Louis, MO
  • July 21-22, 2022, St. Louis, MO

M 2020/21-11 Motion was made to go into Executive Session.

Motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

M 2020/21-12 Motion was made to go out of Executive Session.

Motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

M 2020/21-13 Motion was made to extend special thanks to Phil Johnson as Chairman and Gene Partlow as Vice Chairman of Int'l Lutheran Laymen's League/Lutheran Hour Ministries for their outstanding service these past years, and wish them God’s rich blessings as they continue to serve Him.
Motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

19 Partlow offered a closing prayer.

20 Meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Gretchen Jameson, Secretary