

Altadena Rotary Club - Membership Committee

Minutes for Thursday, July 12th
at the Seyffert home, 610 E. Calaveras St., 7 p.m.

Present: Applegate, Carlson, Cox, Cunningham, Foreman, Johnson, McCurry, Mehringer, Zoeller, & Seyffert (chair).

A. Business Session

1. Summary and approval of the minutes of the most recent meeting.

As no one had a copy of the minutes of the last meeting of the committee's 2011-12 year, and as it was recalled that the principal if not sole topic of that meeting was to plan for the successful "Each One, Bring One" event, Dennis Mehringer moved to approve the minutes of the meeting "as remembered." The motion was seconded by Mike Zoeller and approved.

2. Visioning review, as it relates to membership.

Gordon Seyffert reviewed the goals from the Visioning Workshop that related to membership. Foremost among these was the expansion of the club from the current 32 members to 60 within 4 to 5 years. This would represent a net gain each year equal to the membership added in the year just completed. There was a general consensus amongst those present that such an achievement was indeed possible if the club were to continue to pursue prospective new members as aggressively as was done in 2011-12. Further discussion yielded agreement on (1) member retention and (2) an increased representation of the diversity found within the community as key results to be achieved during the forthcoming years.

As a part of the discussion of retention, the group reviewed the status of certain specific present and past members with an eye towards finding a path or paths to further personal commitment on the part of some of the newly recruited members, and also finding ways to attract lapsed members back into the club. It was agreed that making the financial obligations of Rotary membership clear to prospects was essential to their later retention; they should be prepared to expend roughly \$100/month once they join. It was further agreed that early involvement in projects and inclusion in the club's fellowship opportunities were equally as important to retention. New generations and e-clubs were discussed in general terms, with Ray Carlson being singled out for his taking on the post of club New Generations chair.

3. Setting our Membership goals and objectives.

Further refinement of the above discussions resulted in several valuable suggestions. Past chair Craig Cox stressed the importance of rebuilding part of the infrastructure that had been put aside as membership had declined in recent years. [The "cold calls" on community businesses that he had initiated during the past year should, we agreed, also be carried forward.] Spouse "buy-in" was mentioned as a key to retention, as was the inducement of new members to expend some personal efforts (so that they might quickly gain a sense of "ownership" within the club).

It was announced that a nearby club with a small present membership might be induced to join with us, but they would require that we first agree to alternate meeting times between our established Noon programs and a time later in the afternoon. No recommendation was reached on this matter, and further discussions with that club will be pursued.

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4. Adoption of a budget recommendation to achieve our targets.

Gordon Seyffert suggested that, in lieu of any costly new initiative, the budget should be kept at its present level; this would mean a membership development budget of \$1,245.48. Julius Johnson recommended that it be upped slightly to provide some leeway for a sustained aggressive effort to meet our stated membership goals. Dennis Mehringer and Sue Applegate amended their motion offered to maintain the budget at last year's level to include an increase to \$1,400.00, which motion passed.

5. "What's on Your Mind?" -- time for additional personal observations

There followed a wide-ranging discussion of several of the previously identified issues. Additionally, Gordon Seyffert asked for a discussion of the importance of social media to our outreach; the club currently has a mostly inactive Facebook page, and there has been an offer of assistance in (re-)activating it. This led to a mention of LinkedUp, Meetup, Yelp and others. It was suggested that social media might well provide a means of attracting new members who have home-based businesses -- outreach to such concerns having received significant support at our Visioning Workshop.

Gordon Seyffert reminded those present that our new president, Julius Johnson, has asked that we match personal leadership with the goals and objectives we identify as key for the coming year (regarding membership, but also all other areas of activity). He then volunteered to start this by offering to accompany Craig Cox on followup calls to cold calls made last year, but still pending responses.

Tom McCurry pledged to look into approaching the local Armenian community (which has provided active members in past years). Dennis Mehringer said he would pursue contacts with certain Asian groups by again contacting a pastor with whom he is acquainted. Steve Cunningham, our newest member, pledged to become active with the Concert in the Park series. Ray Carlson affirmed his commitment to seeking avenues to New Generations persons. Mike Zoeller volunteered to seek out Alex Cortes, owner of the very successful El Patron restaurant, as a first step in recruiting Latino/a members. Finally, Jacque Foreman agreed to take action on the suggestion of Julius Johnson that a Rotary-provided list of the 2012 Concert in the Park events be designed and printed in time for the third concert. This suggestion arose from Julius' observation that several people stopped at our table asking for such a card.

6. Solicitation of suggestions for next month's agenda.

Suggestions began with a request for further reports on the social media and club merger questions. It was further recommended that we discuss using a District 5300 provided list of former Rotarians in our area who might be contacted about joining our club as reactivated members; it must be determined if such a list exists and is available to us. Lastly, an extended discussion of the home-based businesses initiative was agreed to. Further suggestions may be communicated to the chair in advance of the meeting. It was agreed that monthly meetings will be held on the second Thursday of each month -- which, for the next scheduled meeting, will be August 9th, again at 7 p.m. at the Seyffert home.

7. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned, with almost everyone departing.

B. Optional Fellowship & Networking Session

Ray Carlson and Gordon Seyffert continued to discuss New Generation Service and how it should be pursued. Ray shared a draft Cambodia brochure, and they discussed how best to publicize past Job Creation & Entrepreneurship achievements.