

Minutes: Heartland of Texas Emmaus Community Executive Board Meeting

September 5, 2023, 7:00 PM, Burnet FUMC

Attendees: Alan Bazard (Zoom), JoAnn Dilworth, Rich Gilchrist (Zoom), Roberta Goodman, Robert Hall, Bob Munsey, Laura Orr, Grady Roe

Guests: Troy Ellet, Richard Wendrock

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM and Grady opened us in prayer.
2. August Minutes:
 - a. Bob made a motion to accept the August minutes and Robert seconded. Acceptance of the minutes passed unanimously.
3. Treasurer's Report:
 - a. The checking account has been reconciled to the August bank statement.
 - b. Income listed as Individ, Business Contributions comes from two donations to the Scholarship Fund (\$2000 and \$120) and one to the General Fund.
 - c. Under Communications Expense, the email/text plan with Avochato has been cancelled without a refund.
 - d. The latest figures on the Men's Walk: \$10,451 income less expenses of \$10,214.36 (Eagles Wings deposit made in November 2022); net \$236.64.
 - e. Form 1023-EZ will be filed soon with the IRS so we can make purchases from Upper Room exempt from their state taxes.
4. Women's Walk 2023 Update (from JoAnn in Gay's absence):
 - a. There are 24 pilgrims so far.
 - b. Two team meetings have been held. The final meeting will be held on October 7.
 - c. A meeting with three ALDs, Bob, and JoAnn will be held on Sunday, September 10
 - d. JoAnn has a first draft of the schedule.
 - e. JoAnn has received several scholarship requests. The names were withheld during the meeting to respect the privacy of the applicants.
 - i. 3 are for pilgrims, 2 for servant team members.
 - ii. All cited financial hardship.
 - iii. All have paid the \$25 deposit and are requesting assistance with the balance.
 - iv. We can also pay the \$25 application fee, if necessary.
 - v. We'll make sure they get their books free of charge.
 - vi. Laura moved to approve the scholarships, Bob seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
5. The HOTEK data gathering form in Google Forms was missing some data. Rather than trying to troubleshoot it, Rich will prepare a new form.
6. Merger with the Austin and Llano Communities:
 - a. Bob doesn't see it as a merger, but a partnership.
 - b. Llano is already part of HOTEK. The issue is Austin.
 - c. Financials are a big deal and should remain separate, regardless of what we do. If we part ways at some point, untangling the financials will be very difficult.
 - d. The gatherings would remain separate, but all gathering dates should be published, allowing members from the communities to decide which to attend.
 - e. Laura mentioned that Austin wants to have leadership positions on the HOTEK board.
 - f. Grady wondered how many of Austin's planned walks didn't happen.

- g. Roberta received some cautionary feedback from Austin clergy about their Emmaus community dynamics.
 - h. Austin has been rather audacious regarding how things should be done, suggesting that where there are differences between the communities, HOTEK should just adopt what Austin does. This is a rather odd approach for a community seeking help.
 - i. JoAnn felt that Austin made some inappropriate comments. For example, we need to raise our rates to match theirs.
 - ii. Richard added that they said we can change our bylaws to accommodate their board requirements.
 - i. JoAnn feels that this shouldn't be a merger, but a partnership with parameters. For example:
 - i. Allow non-voting board participation.
 - ii. Set the partnership term at some agreed upon length, such as 2 years.
 - iii. Etc.
 - j. Richard mentioned that they suggested that we merge into their website (they already use Mail Chimp). Which community would sponsor walks?
 - k. Robert mentioned that we need to give them short term goals.
 - l. JoAnn sees no reason to change our walks.
 - m. Alan said we need to take it in small steps and see how it goes. He doesn't see Llano being able to sponsor walks.
 - n. JoAnn pointed out that technically, Llano is already part of HOTEK.
 - o. Rich mentioned that they must be willing to work with us to make this work. If they insist on dictating the terms, then the deal is off.
 - p. Troy mentioned how Marble Falls and Burnet worked together on about 10 walks and they worked well.
 - i. When we started including Leander, Bertram, and Liberty Hill, people stopped attending gatherings.
 - ii. Merging the boards was difficult. Rules had to be finagled.
 - iii. The financials were difficult, but it did result in an examination of the books and the books being improved.
 - q. Bob wondered about adding Llano and Austin people to the board. The bylaws provide some flexibility here.
 - r. Troy added that perhaps they can be non-voting board members.
 - s. Alan liked the idea of a partnership and reiterated the point about taking small steps. Right now, we're just dealing with hypotheticals. Let's see what happens.
 - t. Grady mentioned that the board appears to be of one accord.
 - u. Richard cautioned that we prepare in writing what we're going to say ahead of meeting with Austin and Llano again. We don't want to be stumbling in our answers.
 - v. Bob suggested that we review our written proposal in a special meeting called prior to our regularly scheduled meeting of October 2.
 - w. Alan will prepare a draft of the proposal and e-mail it to the board for review.
7. Bob closed the meeting at 8:16 and Roberta closed us in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Rich Gilchrist, Secretary

September 11, 2023