

“Experience different views. Discover common ground.”

**Minutes of Friendship Force of Central North Carolina Board Meeting
Thursday, February 1, 2018**

Present: Don Sylvester, Barbara North, Ray Kiszely, Marilyn John, Martha Brown, Leroy Stokes

The Board of Directors/Leadership Council of FFCNC met for its scheduled monthly meeting on Thursday, February 1, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. at the Main Street United Methodist Church in Kernersville, NC. Leadership Council Coordinator, Don Sylvester, opened the meeting with a welcome and provided copies of the proposed agenda.

Minutes for the November 9, 2017 board meeting were approved.

One response was received regarding request to members for a Gatekeeper. This was from Judy Greene. As she has been in the past and still is very active with other duties for the club, Barbara's preference is to recruit a member who is not otherwise contributing so much time to the club. Barbara contacted Lucy Kaplan, Sandy Bungaard, and Charlotte Hamlin about this. None of them are comfortable enough with their computer skills to take on this role, but they all agreed to serve on the committee planning for the inbound visit of FF Bundaberg.

It was also suggested that a different name for the Gatekeeper could be helpful, but no suggestions were made.

Regarding the need for a seventh Leadership Council member filling the role of Secretary, Don asked for clarification of these duties. He will share this information with Patti Gilmour who seems willing to accept this role.

Marilyn commented that the interest surveys are incomplete because she has had difficulty getting our newest members to complete the interest survey and in some cases getting renewing members to update their surveys.

Ray offered to call all FFCNC members to 1.) Make sure they received the invitation to the February 24 social event, 2.) See if they can attend if they have not already rsvp'd, 3.) Obtain interest survey from the new members, 4.) See if anyone would be interested and willing to serve as Gatekeeper or in other capacities. He will wait until he hears from Don before starting his calls so that he will know for certain whether Patti will serve as Secretary. If not, Ray will also see if anyone would be willing to fill that role.

Ray also suggested that we begin to offer an orientation for new members. This would involve having a current member visit each new member to explain the club, answer any questions, discuss their interests and perhaps determining how they may start being involved (e.g., helping some committee or sub-committee with some limited task if they want to).

Don and Marylin noted that there may be a problem needing exploration, i.e., what we can invite prospects (and new members) to in order to educate them about the club and to eventually start to involve them in the club. Do we need more regular social events and should they include some educational content?

The dates for 2018 Board meetings were discussed. They will be held on March 1, April 19, May 17, June 21, July 12, August 9, Sept. 13, Oct. 4, and Nov. 15. The Annual Meeting will be held on Oct. 30 if the Fellowship Hall at MSUMC, K'ville can be reserved. Don or Barbara will contact Betsy Tang to reserve the meeting room for the earliest board meetings. The later board meetings and the annual meeting will not be able to be scheduled per church policy until within six months of the meeting dates.

Marylin shared a few updates related to membership. The cell phone numbers for Ray and Doris are reversed. The Thornbergs are listed on the most recent membership list; however, they have not renewed their membership. Other long time members who have not renewed their memberships are the Parks, Russells, Scherls, and Roberta Michael. She has not received a response from the Kalets. Our membership last year was 70 and it is currently 59 members.

Discussion focused next on efforts to recruit new members. Don, Barbara, and Marylin watched a webinar on this topic which was sponsored by FFI. The webinar emphasized the use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. All present felt that the challenge for FFCNC is that we do not have many members who are comfortable enough with their computer skills to assist with setting up and maintaining an FFCNC presence on these websites.

Don reviewed the minutes from the last meeting when several membership recruiting ideas were raised. They are listed here along with updates:

- Day sponsorship at WFDD. Charlotte Hamlin agreed to follow up with a friend who works there; however, the friend is no longer there.
- Meet Up - Don asked Lucy if she knew about this website &/or could research it; however Lucy was not familiar with it and not comfortable with researching it. Martha, however, had looked into it somewhat and shared what she could remember.
 - There are literally hundreds of groups, organizations, support groups, etc. in our area that have events listed on this website. Many, however, seemed out of date.
 - The group/organization/sponsor has some space in which they can describe their purpose, etc. as well as their upcoming events. Martha could not remember for certain if they can post photos.
 - If one is interested in an event, only some of the information is provided. One needs to click on something to send an inquiry to get the rest of the details like where to meet and time. Therefore, the organization has to have someone who can receive these inquiries and respond to them.
 - Martha did not think there was a cost for this.
 - It was agreed that if we pursued this, the Activities Coordinator would be the most logical person to receive inquiries. Barbara offered to do this if Karla, our 2018 Activities Coordinator, does not want to do this or cannot do it.

- Martha agreed to follow up with Karla. If possible, Martha will try to get our club loaded on this site in time to announce the February 24 social event.
- GSO Shepherd Center – Barbara North had previously mentioned some of the classes they offer and that they sometimes have guest speakers. At today’s meeting, Barbara described in more detail what they offer and what she hopes would be a speaking opportunity for FFCNC. She will follow up with Shepherd Center to learn when the next sessions are; how they select speakers; if they would be interested in having us speak at one of the luncheons that have speakers; do they have projection equipment; etc.
- Since the last meeting Don called the Chamber of Commerce to see if they still publish a booklet that describes non-profit organizations in GSO. They no longer do this. They suggested that we link up with Welcome Wagon.
- Discussion also focused on our Facebook page. Marilyn said that she will take a look at it to see what is out there. Even though we have had members responsible for our Facebook page over the years, the impression is that it has not had any updates in quite some time. Charles uses Facebook a little bit; Marilyn will see if it may be possible for him to do something with it.
- It was agreed that more discussion about marketing efforts should be explored outside of the regular Board meetings. A separate meeting of available Board members was scheduled for 7pm on February 28 at the home of Don and Patti Sylvester.

Regarding Journey updates:

- Martha had previously distributed an update on all our outstanding journeys. There were no questions about the update.
- Leroy has received six applications for Oregon.
- Martha has sent the Ambassador – Host Matching Form to Oklahoma (FFO).
- Judy and Martha were approved as Co-Ambassador Coordinators for visiting FFO.
- Barbara and Jim were approved as Co-Host Coordinators for our visit from FF Bundaberg.
- Marilyn passed on a question from the Sao Luis, Brazil club that was sent to Charles. They asked what is the best month to visit us in 2019. Martha explained the matching process done annually by FFI in Atlanta. When we receive the results in the next month for the inbound and outbound international journeys, Atlanta will suggest a month for the journeys based on information provided by the respective clubs. If FF Sao Luis completed their survey correctly, i. e.: they put down that they would like their 2019 outbound journey to be to our club, then we should be matched for that visit. If the month suggested by Atlanta does not suit us, the two clubs can negotiate mutually agreeable alternative dates.
- It was noted that the incoming Moscow exchange could be revived if their visa applications were to be suddenly approved. If that were to occur, we would revisit the practicality of that exchange for us at that time.
- Ray asked if his outstanding credit as host ambassador for the Cleveland County, UK visit in 2015, which is due to expire at the end of this year, can be transferred to another member. Given Ray’s current medical situation and the fact that more than likely he will not be able to travel on our journeys this year, the board voted and approved that Ray may transfer this credit to Doris and we will extend the expiration date of this one credit to the end of 2019.

Ray reviewed the Treasurer's report. He has questions for Judy regarding some of the FFO journey financial matters. Further discussion revealed that Ray has not seen the financial spreadsheet Judy created for this journey, so he will obtain that first before pursuing any questions with Judy.

Eleven members have signed up for the social planned for Feb. 24 at Merlot & VanGogh.

Discussion was held regarding making a contribution to MSUMC for our use of their rooms in 2017. No one could remember what we paid in 2016 and Ray did not have that information with him. He will check that when he gets home; notify the board; and make a recommendation for a contribution for 2017.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.